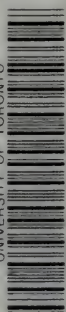
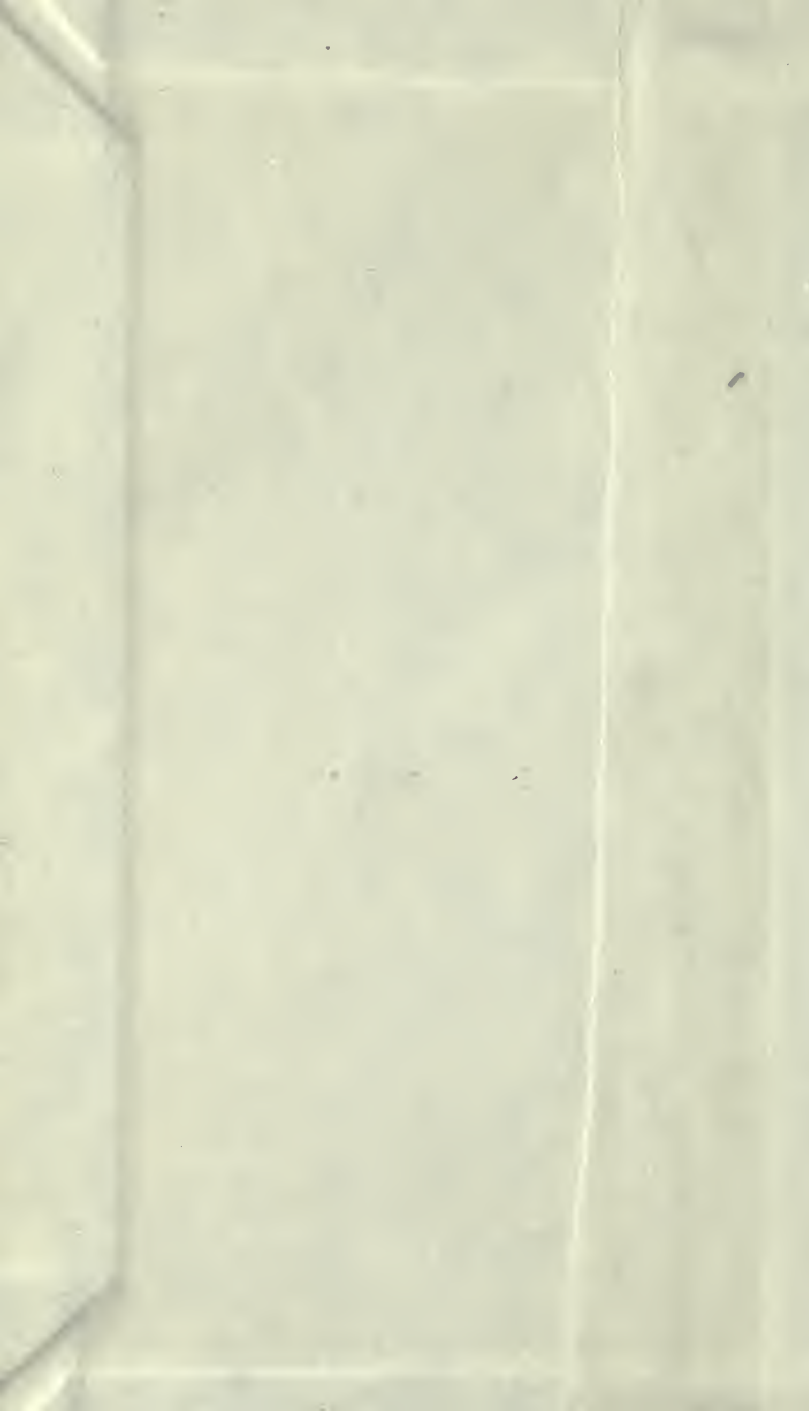
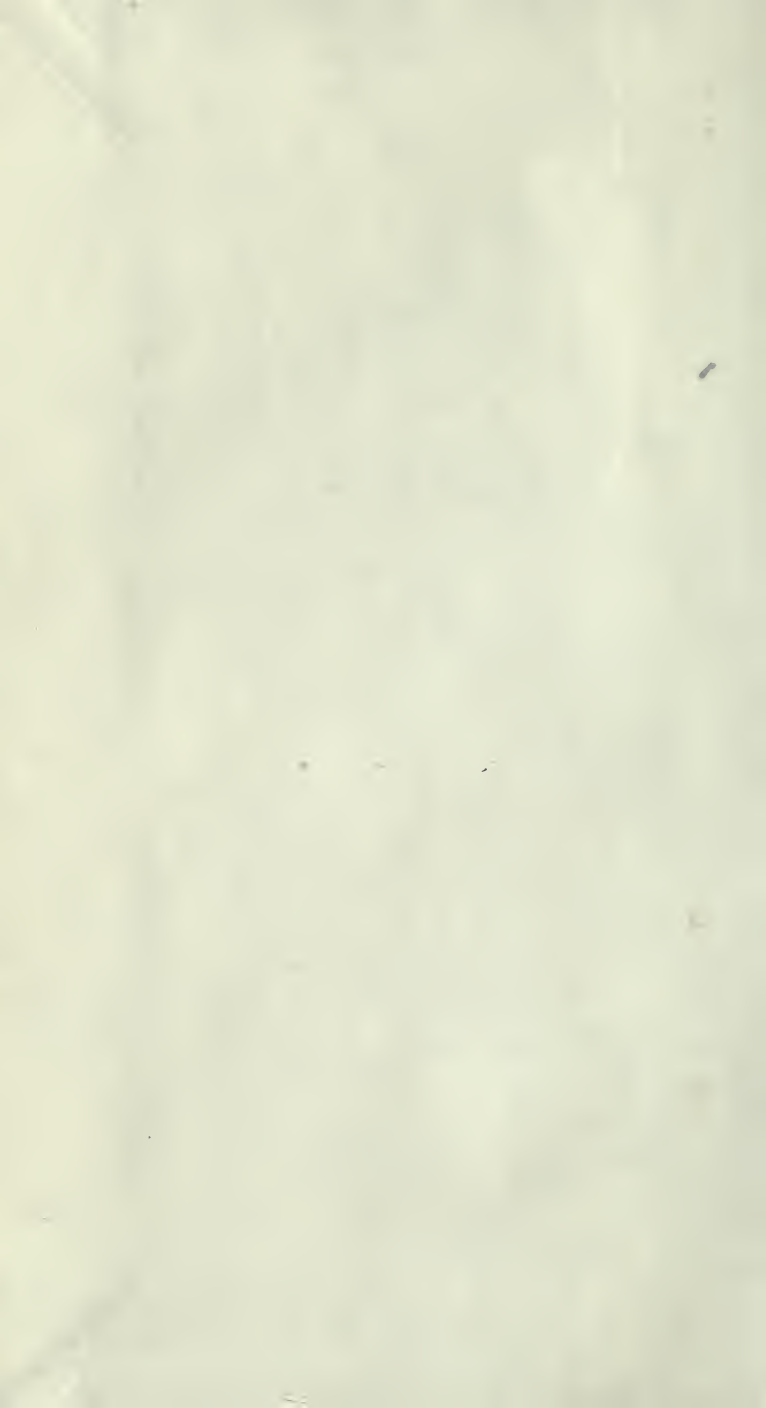


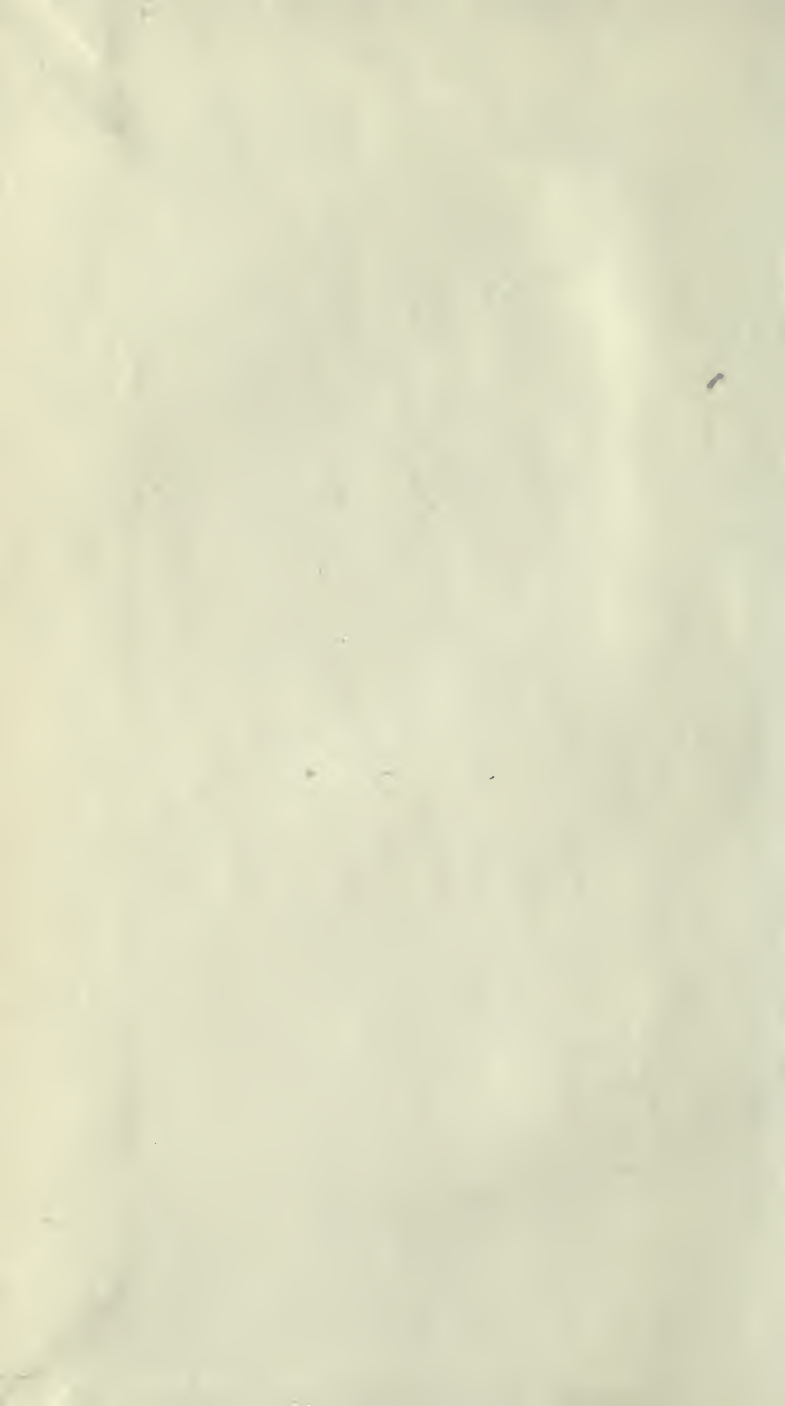
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BRAMBLETYE HOUSE;

OR,

CAVALIERS AND ROUNDHEADS.

A NOVEL.

BY ONE OF THE

AUTHORS OF THE "REJECTED ADDRESSES."

Horace Smith.

"Now universal England getteth drunk
For joy that Charles her monarch is restor'd;
And she, that sometime wore a saintly mask,
The stale grown vizor from her face doth pluck,
And weareth now a suit of morris-bells,
With which she jingling goes through all her towns and villages."
Lamb's John Woodvil.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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BRAMBLETYE HOUSE.

CHAPTER I.

What would you have, you curse!

————— He that depends

Upon your favours swims with fins of lead,

And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye—trust ye!

With every minute you do change a mind;

And call him noble that was once your hate,

Him vile that was your garland.

SHAKSPEARE.

DURING the whole period of our hero's residence at Haelbeck, which had now extended to a considerable length of time, none of its inmates had received any tidings whatever from Rotterdam; a silence which, under any other circumstances, would have excited considerable uneasiness; but as Jocelyn had mentioned the sus-

pitions, and even accusations, to which Beverning had been exposed from his frequent communications with the Spanish Netherlands, and the secret manner in which they were conducted, they took it for granted, that he had found it prudent, for the present, to abstain from all notice of his expatriated friends; and could not blame a caution which had become as necessary for their safety as his own. To the exile, indeed, nothing could be more gratifying than the belief that he was totally forgotten by all the world; every arrival was to him a subject of fresh apprehension; the very sight of a letter agitated his nerves, and shook his soul to its foundations; and the death-like quietude and monotony of Haelbeck would have, perhaps, soothed him into a more patient endurance of his miseries, could he have chaced away the phantoms that gave horror to the night, and rendered unavailing all the tranquillity of the day.

There were reasons, however, for the silence

of the worthy Burgomaster, of a much more serious description than entered into their conjectures. It has been mentioned, that, at the period of Jocelyn's sudden departure from his house, he had been summoned to Amsterdam, to answer certain charges of a political nature; charges, which he had treated with indignant contempt, declaring that he would not be satisfied with mere acquittal, but must have an ample revenge upon his perjured accusers. In the confidence of his power, and the consciousness of his innocence, he had anticipated a triumph which the result of his examination did not, by any means, justify; for he had neither made sufficient allowance for the virulence of party feeling, which then embittered the different political factions; nor for the rancour of that jealousy which was entertained towards himself personally. In all countries the worshippers of Plutus regard with an evil eye the brother who enjoys the smiles of the deity in a superior

degree to themselves, thinking, perhaps, that their own portion would be larger were it not for the accumulations of this favoured individual: on the present occasion this feeling was aggravated by difference of political opinion. Beverning was of the Republican party, at the head of which was the celebrated Pensionary De Witt; many of those, before whom he was summoned, were of the Orange faction, and almost all regarded him with envy. His invariable success in his adventures to the Indies and elsewhere, his superior opulence, his magnificent establishment, even his extensive charities, were subjects of sore jealousy to the merchant-magistrates of Amsterdam, who, now that they had got this successful rival in their clutches, seemed determined to exert their superior power, by humiliating and insulting, even if they could not legally condemn him.

In the exercise of this vindictive jealousy, they questioned and cross-questioned him with

an arrogance, which the proud and bold-spirited Burgomaster was the last man to bear with patience. He did, however, command himself so far as to explain and utterly refute everything that was laid to his charge; but when he was told that his conniving at Jocelyn's escape, however innocent he might be, was an act of contumacy towards their High Mightinesses, that merited condign punishment; when he was twitted with the undue sumptuousness of his establishment, and jeeringly informed that the rich cargo of the *Vrouw Roosje* had turned his head; when he was desired to answer the frivolous and vexatious questions put to him, with the respect due to his superiors,—the wrath, which had for a long time been gathering heat, at length boiled over in a loud slap of his hand upon the table, and a furious exclamation of: “*Donder ende Blixem! Superiors!*” This startling exordium was instantly followed by a torrent of vituperative eloquence, wherein their High

Mightinesses were told they were pettifogging hucksters, and paltry pedlars, and cozening costermongers, fitter for the shop-board than the Council-board, and much better qualified to cure red herrings than the diseases of the state: at the conclusion of which harangue, he snapped his fingers at them in scorn, and sate down fuming with indignation.

The Philistines were not more astounded when Samson shook their own temple about their ears, than were these Cæsars of the Counting-house at the storm they had brought down upon their heads. To beard them thus in their own hall, was to deny Diana at Ephesus; the sacrilegious offender was ordered instantly to quit their presence, which he obeyed with an angry dignity, lifting up his ample figure, puffing out his cheeks, surveying them with that sort of look which a lion may be supposed to cast at the barking curs whom he has just felled with a blow of his paw; and ejaculating, as he got to the

door : “ Hey, Slapperloot ! Superiors ! ” No sooner had he disappeared than a furious debate ensued as to the punishment to be inflicted for so daring an outrage on the constituted authorities. Not contemplating that their High Mightinesses could ever be pelted with such opprobrious epithets, the law had provided no penalty for the offence. Under these circumstances they undertook to supply the omissions of the Statute Book, by condemning him to a smart fine and a month’s imprisonment, claiming to themselves the praise of egregious magnanimity, for not visiting him with a much heavier judgment.

To the month’s imprisonment, although he knew it to be perfectly illegal, and it prevented his superintending the unlading of his darling Vrouw Roosje, he might have submitted with that sort of patience which arises from consoling oneself with projects of future revenge ; but they touched the apple of his eye when they fingered

his cash. Lavish as he was in expenditure, he could not bear to witness the waste of a single stiver; to be robbed of it was ten times worse; and this was a wholesale instance of both, combined with insult, illegality, and oppression. He paid the money, however, still considering them his debtors, and looking forward with something of a Shylock satisfaction, to the moment when they should give him blood for his gold.

At the time of his examination, his illustrious friend, De Witt, who was no less distinguished as a commander than as a statesman and patriot, had been absent at sea, successfully fighting the battles of his country. He was now returned, and the worthy Burgomaster immediately confided to him the wrongs he had suffered, and the plans he meditated for humbling the pride of his oppressors. Both were staunch Republicans; conceiving the war with England unnecessary, as well as impolitic, they had strenuously opposed it from the

beginning; and they were now, more than ever, anxious to terminate it, as they saw that it was throwing all the influence into the hands of the Orange faction, whose designs were well known to be inimical to the liberties of Holland. For the accomplishment of their first object, a peace between the two countries, they employed as their agent a Frenchman named Buat, who had originally been appointed, by the Prince of Orange, a captain of the Horse Guards; and having subsequently married a Dutch woman of fortune, and appearing to be well affected to the States, was by them confirmed in his command. In vivacity, quickness of parts, and a remarkable aptitude for intrigue, this man was admirably adapted to their purpose; but he had one besetting sin, which at times utterly disqualified him for an enterprize that required vigilant secrecy and self-possession. Such was his addiction to wine, that he occasionally suffered its treacherous influence to ob-

tain complete mastery of his reason ; and indeed he was often heard to praise the cold and foggy climate of Holland, as the best in the world ; since it was constantly necessary to repel its chilling assaults by the generous warmth of the grape-juice ; adding, that no one could now accuse him of living to drink, as they had done in France, when, in fact, he was only taking medicine, and drinking to live.

This acute, but slippery and dangerous, man entered into a correspondence with Lord Arlington, the British Secretary of State, sounding him as to the conditions on which peace might be expected, carrying on the correspondence in cypher, and showing the letters as he received them to De Witt. During the progress of this secret negociation, the Burgomaster of Rotterdam incautiously communicated with Buat by letter, darkly alluding to what was going on, but indulging in open and not very measured abuse of the parties in power at Amsterdam.

Either from his natural predilection for in-

trigue, or from an apprehension that De Witt and the Republican party would be dispossessed of all power, the Frenchman despatched his friend Silvius to London, with a second private cypher for carrying on a correspondence with the Orange party in Holland, thus intending to supplant De Witt, by whom he had been originally employed. But this plot upon plot could not be conducted with impunity, by one who suffered wine to get into his head when it should have been kept clear for these ticklish and complicated machinations. Returning home one night in a state of intoxication, singing with much more glee than distinctness of articulation his favourite song—

Quelle couleur est plus vermeille,
Que le Nectar de ma bouteille?
C'est crime d'y mettre de l'eau,
Rien n'est si beau.

Quand on en boit, sa douce flamme
Chatouille jusqu'au fond de l'âme,
Faites m'en raison,
Rien n'est si bon."—

just as he concluded his *chanson à boire*, he was encountered by De Witt, who asked him whether he had received any fresh letters from England. "Yes," replied Buat, "I have one in my pocket, and you shall see it immediately if you will lend me your arm, for my eyes are so bad at night that the houses seem to be turning round, and I may tumble into one of the canals ere I reach my own door, which is the last death I should wish to die, having a most pious abhorrence of water."

At these words he took a letter from his pocket, looked at the superscription, and handed it to De Witt, who opening it, and seeing at a glance that it was in a different cypher, requested him to walk on a few paces, as he had some orders to give at the guard-house, but would overtake him presently. This promise he performed, but he came accompanied by a file of soldiers, who placed the Frenchman under arrest, and then proceeded to his house, and

seized his cabinet, where all his letters and the new cypher were discovered. A court of justice was hastily erected for his trial, and in three days the unfortunate Buat was beheaded.

By a most unlucky chance for the Burgo-master, his letters remained in the cabinet at the time of its seizure. The dark allusions to the secret negociations with England, the abuse of the Dutch Government, the former charge of his harbouring an English spy in his house, the recent punishment he had suffered for his audacious contumely, all seemed to conspire in proving him to be a traitor and an enemy to his country. A thousand exaggerations were instantly circulated through the city, and the popular fury being artfully inflamed by his political and commercial adversaries, a tumultuous and ungovernable rabble hurried towards his residence, swearing that they would be satisfied with nothing but his immediate destruction. De Witt, however, found means to apprise his

friend of his danger, urging him to instant flight, and counselling him to conceal himself till the storm had blown over, and the populace could be disabused of their error. The Burgomaster knew the blind and brutal character of a Dutch mob, and saw that not a moment was to be lost. Hurrying with Constantia into his cutter, he was soon sailing down the river with a favourable breeze. As he intended passing over to England, where Winky Boss might prove useful from his knowledge of the language, while his fidelity, under any circumstances, entitled him to a preference in selecting a servant to accompany him in his flight, he communicated to him in a few words the imminency of his present peril, directing him to put up in a valise some papers of importance which he instructed him where to find, and follow him without delay to Maaslandsleys, at which place he should await his arrival. To avoid suspicion he was ordered to leave the

city in an opposite direction, and make a considerable detour before he reached the appointed place of meeting.

All this did Winky Boss perform with his usual deliberate and accurate observance of orders. The papers were carefully secured, the valise was strapped to his back, he was equipped in his travelling garb, mounted upon the back of Punchinello, smoking his pipe, and proceeding out of the city at an easy trot, when upon turning the corner of a street he found himself in the very midst of the infuriated mob, who were hurrying towards the Boompies for the purpose of arresting the Burgomaster. Being recognized by some of these worthies, he was seized, pulled from his horse, and his valise torn from his back before he had time to prepare for defence, even could it have availed him against such a formidable host of assailants. The contents of the valise, which was hastily

ransacked, not only confirmed the rumours of the Burgomaster's escape, which now began to reach them from other quarters, but sufficiently betrayed that the bearer was proceeding to join his master, wherever he had concealed himself.

"Whither has the traitorous Burgomaster betaken himself?" cried a fierce-looking fellow, who seemed to be the leader of the rabble.

"I don't know any such person," calmly replied Boss.

"I mean your villanous master," resumed the same party.

"I have no villanous master," answered Boss.

—"I am no servant of yours?"

"Saucy scoundrel! you will not deny that you serve Adrian Beverning."

"No; I am too proud of such a master to deny him."

"And you know where he is at this moment."

"Ja, Ja," replied Boss, with a familiar nod of his head.

“Then why did you not tell us so in the first instance?”

“Because I have no intention to do so, either first or last.”

“Villain!” resumed the fellow, holding a long pointed knife to his throat,—“have you now a mind to discover?”

“Not the least in the world,” replied Boss, with the utmost seeming indifference.

“Cut out his stubborn tongue!” exclaimed another of the mob.

“Do!” said Boss. “I shall be more likely to tell you then:” and as he said this, he slowly puffed a mouthful of smoke into the face of this new assailant.

“Curse the fellow!” continued the same party, “he seems to mind his pipe more than our threats.”

“A good deal more,” replied Boss, favouring him with another whiff, which so provoked the recipient that he violently dashed the pipe out of his mouth.

Boss had endured, with patience, the scurrilous terms applied to his master and himself; but an insult to his pipe was beyond the limitations assigned to his phlegm. His eyes began to wink and sparkle with rapid corruscations, and though the rest of his face was as imperturbable as if it had been cut out of wood, his limbs appeared to sympathize with his optics; for he suddenly raised his muscular arm, and, with one blow, laid the destroyer of his pipe sprawling upon the ground, amidst its fragments.

This was the signal for a general tumult and assault: knives were drawn and flourished, fists began to rain blows upon the broad shoulders of Boss, and it would probably have gone hard with him, had not the leader of the rabble, in a loud and authoritative voice, ordered them to desist; reminding them that the prisoner was, perhaps, the only person who could guide them to the traitorous Burgomaster's retreat, and

that the torture would presently wring the secret from him. "I will state nothing," cried Winky Boss, "to an angry mob, which may pervert every thing I utter into a crime; but if you will take me before the Justiciary Vanderhoof, I will make a deposition of all that I know."

"To the Justiciary! Away with him to the Justiciary!" cried the many-headed monster; and they forthwith began hauling him to the opposite extremity of the town, where that functionary dwelt; and which was the sole reason why his name had been mentioned by the prisoner. Considerable time was gained for his fugitive master, by his thus diverting the attention of the mob; nor was he a whit more disposed to give them the information they sought, when they at length reached the magistrate's residence. No sooner did that personage understand the object of this unexpected visit, than he seated himself with all due ceremony in his hall of justice,

bidding his clerk prepare to take down the deposition of the prisoner; but Winky Boss declared he would save him that trouble, as he had changed his mind for the present; adding, however, that if his worthy friends, the mob, would do him the favour to call at the same hour, on the following day, he should have no objection to tell them all he knew, as he calculated that by that time the object of their search would be completely beyond their reach.

The previous wrath of the populace, was a halcyon serenity, compared to the fury with which they were seized, at being thus defied and cajoled. Again were their long knives brandished in the air, as they demanded the prisoner with loud cries: in vain did the magistrate implore them not to sully the hall of justice with murder. They rushed impetuously towards their intended victim; when the justiciary, who feared that he might be rendered, in some way, responsible for an assassination committed in

his presence, opened a private door, that communicated with his dwelling-house ; pushed the prisoner in, closed it again, and placing himself before it, declared that he would allow no one to pass, but that he would hold himself accountable for the production of the supposed delinquent, whenever his examination could be safely resumed.

At this moment, two or three voices cried out, " To the Boompies ! to the Boompies ! Let us attack the Burgomaster's house !" and the versatile mob, attracted by the hope of plunder, instantly echoed the cry, and sallied forth to wreak that vengeance upon the property of the master, which they had been prevented from inflicting upon the person of the servant. Miss Vanspaacken, who had, at her own request, been left in charge of the mansion, having received some obscure intimations of the meditated attack, had already ordered all the doors to be closed ; and no popular assault would have

easily forced a massy structure, originally built for defence, had due preparations been made for repelling it. Nothing of this sort was meditated, Miss Vanspaacken relying sufficiently upon the effects of her oratory, to believe that she could tame the savageness of the mob, and induce them to spare the house which she inhabited, as religiously as the Spartans respected the abode of Pindar, when they sacked the city of Thebes.

To give this experiment a fair trial, she betook herself to a lower gallery, whence she harangued them in a speech, as neat as her own formal habiliments. Every syllable was distinctly articulated; the double a's were expanded to their full breadth, and she had never been more happy in the strict grammatical use of the subjunctive mood. But the mob, unfortunately, were in the imperative mood; they commanded her to open the doors, and their mandate not being obeyed, they proceeded to pelt her with objectionable missiles, and to batter the princi-

pal entrance with the beam of a crane, which they tore down for that purpose. Soon obtaining admittance, by this rough expedient, they rushed into the house with loud cries of triumph, exhibiting the same blind and brutal rage in the work of pillage and demolition, that led them, at a subsequent period, to assault and massacre their best friend, and the last remaining champion of their liberties, the illustrious De Witt.

Such of the costly furniture as could not be conveniently carried off, was broken and destroyed; the rare exotics and rich roots were thrown from the balconies and windows, the museum, with all its curiosities and quaint devices of clock-work and mechanism, was scattered and trampled under foot; the matchless marbles, and exquisite statues of the gallery, were barbarously cast down and mutilated. In the progress of this work of devastation, a party of the rioters approached a door, before which Miss Vanspaacken was keeping guard. During

her long domiciliation with the Burgomaster, his generosity had enabled this lady to amass a considerable sum, which he had repeatedly urged her to lay out in some secure investment; but she knew so much better than any body else the best disposition to make of her property, and, moreover, was so perfectly well acquainted with the insecurity of all the methods recommended to her for its profitable employment, that she preferred hoarding, and suffering it to lie unproductive, to incurring the smallest risk. This over-caution, as is not unc customary in such cases, defeated its own object: in vain did she assure the marauders that the apartment she was guarding was exclusively her own, and contained not a single article belonging to Mr. Beverning; in vain did she endeavour to propitiate their favour by declaring that she had always detested his politics, that she believed him to be guilty, and hoped he would be apprehended and punished. This sordid and un-

grateful artifice only exciting their suspicions that there must be some important treasure to conceal, they burst open the door in spite of all her obtestations, and entered the apartment.

For some time they discovered nothing to justify their presentiments. A closet, however, still remained unsearched. This also was broken open, and found to contain some female apparel, and an old deal box, of which she voluntarily tendered the key, most solemnly declaring that it contained nothing but some children's books, which had remained in her possession ever since she kept school. It did indeed exhibit a copious store of well-thumbed Dutch accidences and bescribbled grammars, to the bottom of which the searchers rummaged with some difficulty, but without meeting any thing to reward their pains. They were about to quit the closet, when one of the men attempted to move the box from the wall: its great weight excited his attention; he lifted up one end; a

betraying chink from within, gave them a clue to the concealed treasure; the books were tumbled out; the false bottom was discovered; and the double ducats, which Miss Vanspaacken had for so many years been dropping in, one by one, congratulating herself all the time on her superior prudence and sagacity, were, in a few minutes, the objects of a general scramble among the very refuse of the population.

At the time that the Justiciary Vanderhoof had extricated Winky Boss from the fury of the mob in the manner we have related, it was his intention to have detained him in safe custody, until he could be examined by the competent authorities; but forgetting, in the agitation of the moment, to give immediate orders for his detention, his prisoner marched through the private dwelling-house, passed out of the front door into another street, and seizing time by the forelock, made the best of his way out of the town, intending to proceed a-foot, and join his master at

Maaslandsleys. For the execution of this purpose, however, he arrived too late. De Witt, who was entrusted with the plans of his friend, had instantly despatched a messenger to apprize him of Boss's arrest, and the sacking of his house; and the Burgomaster, who had taken with him a plentiful supply of gold, lost no time in chartering a small neutral vessel, and sailing for the river Thames. The voyage proved short and prosperous, and in due time he and his daughter were landed at Greenwich Wharf, immediately opposite to the new house, then building for the King.

In order that Constantia might enjoy the advantages of female society, Beverning wished to take up his residence in a private family, rather than in a lodging-house; and with this view it was his first intention to betake himself to his correspondent, Alderman Staunton, in Aldersgate-street; but recollecting that he was in close connection with the Government, and that his own delicate situation, as a refugee Dutchman,

rendered it imperatively necessary to avoid all such society as might lead to a suspicion of his being engaged in political intrigue, and thus obstruct his return and the vindication of his character, he resolved to take up his abode in the vicinity of London, and live in as sequestered a manner as possible. For these objects no place appeared so eligible as the residence of his friend, Elias Ashmole, at South Lambeth. With that curious collector he had long been in habits of intimate correspondence; and by constantly transmitting to him, for the enlargement of his celebrated museum, a portion of the rarities which were brought by his captains from the remotest parts of the earth, he had laid him under obligations which he felt with a peculiar satisfaction, and for which he was most eager to testify his gratitude.

He accordingly proceeded with Constantia to Turret House,* which was the name of Mr.

* This mansion would hardly be recognised in our days, from the following passage in Evelyn's Diary—

Ashmole's residence, surprising that gentleman not a little by his unexpected appearance, but receiving from him a most cordial and hospitable welcome. At the moment of his arrival he found him in close confabulation with his intimate associates, Sir Jonas Moore, the mathematician, and the celebrated astrologers, William Lilly and John Bookèr, the object of their conference being to fix a day for the annual astrologers' feast, of which Ashmole was steward, at Painters' Hall. Lilly was decorated with the gold chain and medal he had received from the King

“ The prospect from a turret is very fine, it being so neere London, and yet not discovering any house about the country.” Vol. 2, p. 427. The turret, whence it took its name, has been pulled down, but the house itself, materially enlarged and embellished, and with all its original grounds re-annexed, is still in existence, and in the occupation of the author's friend, William Heseltine, Esq. to whom he takes this opportunity of offering his acknowledgments, not only for the use, at all times, of his extensive and curious library, but for several suggestions which, he trusts, have improved the interest of the present work.

of Sweden,* and talked with pride of the deference that had been shown him on various occasions by the great ones of the earth, as well as of the general confidence in his knowledge of the celestial sciences, his use of the Mosaical rods, and his supernatural gifts of vaticination. The

* Estimated to be worth above 50*l*. and presented to him in the year 1659, on account of his having mentioned that monarch with great respect in his almanacks of 1657 and 1658. Lilly might well vaunt the homage with which he had been honoured in that credulous and superstitious age. Besides amassing a fortune by the sale of his prophetic powers, he tells us that he was twice consulted by Mrs. Whorwood, on the part of King Charles the First, when that monarch was meditating his escape from Hampton Court, in the first instance, and subsequently from Carisbrook Castle. In 1647 he and Booker were both sent for to the headquarters of Fairfax, the Parliament General, who addressed them in an obscure speech, of which, however, the object seems to have been to bespeak their interest and good offices for the cause in which he was embarked. To secure this point, Lilly received next year a present of 50*l*. in cash, and an order from the Council of State for a pension of 100*l*. per annum. During the siege of Colchester, Lilly and Booker were summoned thither to encourage the soldiers, by predicting the capture of the place, in which they were luckily justified by the

Burgomaster, who had always understood that his friend's house was the resort of philosophers, and men of enlightened intellect, was surprised to hear this Archimago talk of the magical circle, recite Cornelius Agrippa's form of prayer for invoking the angel Salmonæus, and boast of his intimacy with the guardian angels of England, to whom he assigned the names of Salmael and Malchidael.

“ If I had the honour of an acquaintance with those spirits,” said the Burgomaster, “ I would use my influence with them to procure a peace for the country over which they preside: for it has gained but little by the war. Favour me with an introduction to your celestial friends, and I will try the effect of my own eloquence.”

event. We have smiled, in our school exercises, at the Athenian general, who wrote home for some more cattle, and a fresh supply of soothsayers, for the use of his army; but we see that the custom was not extinct in the 17th century; and although the form of the superstition may be altered in our own times, the feeling and the credulity still exist.

“It is only by deep study and painful ordeals,” replied Lilly, “that a man can arrive at that exalted privilege; but if you desire it, I will teach you in six weeks to set up a figure, project a horoscope, and cast a nativity.”

“What hey?” cried the Burgomaster, who had a violent antipathy to quacks and pretenders to superiority of any sort. “And so make me a witch out of petticoats, the best name with which I can dignify you gentlemen astrologers, who ought to be liable to the same fate as your broomstick-riding sisters. No, mijnheer Lilly, I am no pupil of your’s, and no believer in your art. The future is a sealed book, only to be perused by reading the past, for the same causes in all ages will produce the same effects. Horace gave good advice, “*quid sit futurum cras, fuge quærere.*” If we cannot avoid your pretended prophecies, we are better without knowing them: if we can, they are no predictions. As to the stars, they may help us to shape our course at

sea but not ashore, for nothing but egregious vanity can have ever led us to believe that we are married from the day of our birth to one of those heavenly bodies. And yet we laugh at the Chinese lord of the celestial empire, for dubbing himself brother to the sun and moon. Hey, Slapperloot! we are truly a strange race!"

"In all ages people have been believers in our noble art," exclaimed Lilly, tartly.—"And in all ages they have been equally deluded," replied Beverning. "Soothsayers and aruspices have seen as far into the millstone with the aid of beasts' entrails, and the flight of birds, as you have by serving a subpoena upon the stars, but no further. These errors were excuseable in the infancy of the world, for abuse precedes use. Superstition, alchemy, and astrology, have been the parents of religion, chymistry, and astronomy. The old folks have now become superannuated, and ought to be formally deposed. Away with the dotards!"

"For superstition we have nothing to say,"

resumed Lilly; "but the learned books that have been written upon alchemy and astrology sufficiently attest the reality of those sciences."

"Ay, as this Phoenix feather, which our worthy host has just shown me, proves the existence of the bird," said Beverning. "Dender ende Blixem! I want patience when I behold a man in rags pretend to the possession of the philosopher's stone, a blind buzzard, who cannot see his way out of his present difficulties, affect an insight into futurity, and a hen-pecked zany, who is governed by his wife, claiming mastery over the stars and angels." No personal allusion was intended by this last speech, but as it happened that the almanack-making empiric, with all his prescience, had married a termagant, whose star proved ascendant in his family horoscope; he took the observation in high dudgeon, seized the first opportunity of withdrawing with his friends, and in his next year's almanack fell foul of the whole Dutch nation

in revenge for this supposed insult from an individual of their community.

If his previous estimate of his friend's discernment was rather lowered by this specimen of his visitants, the Burgomaster observed many things in his museum and library which were still less calculated to exalt it. In the former, among much that was valuable, there was trash which none but a whimsical and credulous man would have admitted; in the latter there was an undue preponderance of those abstruse treatises, which are considered elaborate foolery by men of sense, and revered as oracles of human wisdom by all true believers in the occult and supernatural. They served, however, to beguile the tedium of his unaccustomed idleness: there were, besides, abundance of other books, and more appropriate society, to cheer his hours; and the kindness of his host was precisely of that nature which he liked,—frank and hospitable, without being obtrusive and importunate.

From the moment of Jocelyn's departure from Rotterdam, Constantia's habitual seriousness had deepened into a depression of spirits, for which, at first, she in vain endeavoured to account. A frank heart and acute intellect like her's, were not, however, long to be deceived, and a rigorous scrutiny into her own feelings soon convinced her that the secret source of her uneasiness was the loss of his society. Every other now became doubly distasteful to her. Imagination exalted that which she could no longer enjoy; contrast threw a deeper shade of degradation over that which still remained to her; she sequestered herself from all communion with her own sphere, devoting herself, however, with an increased zeal to her pious exercises, and her extensive offices of charity. By a beautiful provision of Nature, virtue and charity bless the actor as well as the object, and she never more effectually assuaged her own sorrows than when she was relieving those of others.

From many of these consolatory pursuits she was, of course, cut off by her sudden removal, and her sojourn among strangers. Her mind, no longer absorbed in those occupations which had abstracted it from painful contemplations, again began to prey upon itself; and she was soon destined to encounter a privation that overwhelmed her with fresh sorrows, and finally plunged her into the very depths of despondency.

After returning one afternoon from the play, whither he had accompanied his host, her father complained of a slight indisposition, which he treated with the habitual indifference engendered by a long course of uninterrupted health. His altered looks on the ensuing morning, alarmed his daughter, who in vain urged him to defer his intended visit to London. He went, and although he returned still worse, he obstinately refused all medical advice, having unfortunately imbibed a prejudice against all practitioners of

physic, as impostors, who assumed a power of changing the fixed intentions of Heaven, and altering the destiny of man. His friends and his daughter, not participating in his prejudice, and marking with dismay the progress of his malady, at length sent for a physician, who had no sooner examined his patient, than he pronounced his complaint to be the spotted fever, and expressed great doubts as to his recovery. This declaration instantly spread grief and alarm through the house. Constantia tended her sick parent both by day and night, with the devotedness of filial piety: the rest of the family watched over him with all the ardour of friendship: fresh advice was called in, and every resource of art was lavished upon the patient: but all was vain; and one of the physicians, having caused his daughter to be removed from the room, told the Burgomaster that it was his painful duty to desire him to prepare for death.

An unfeigned astonishment, unmixed however with the smallest consternation, spread itself over Beverning's features at this declaration. A stranger, who had considered his moderate age, his fine constitution, his healthy appearance, his large and athletic form, might have almost imagined that death would have been afraid to look him in the face; and Beverning himself, who had never experienced an hour's illness, and therefore never calculated upon being cut short in the very middle of his career, was more under the influence of amazement than of any other feeling, at the tidings he had just received.—“Hey Slapperloot! death!” he exclaimed: “surely you must be mistaken. I have no time to die yet: I have a thousand things to do, and above all I should be sorry to leave the world till I have punished the rogues at Amsterdam.”

“You must forget the affairs of this world,” replied the physician—“your disease is not less inexorable in its nature than rapid in its pro-

gress; and as to punishing those who have offended you, it is your duty at this trying moment to forgive all your enemies."

"What! the Jacks in office, who imprisoned me for nothing, and robbed me of a heavy fine? the perjured villains who lodged false accusations against me?"

"It is incumbent upon you, as a good christian, to forgive them all."

"Well, if I must, I must: I forgive them then; and now, I suppose, I may hate them with a clear conscience; and I hope they will be so visited by the stings of guilt as to be unable to forgive themselves. How long have I to live?"

"Not many hours," replied the physician.

"Let me, then, see no more of you or your medicines," cried the dying Burgomaster, whose prejudice against the profession was confirmed by his present experience of its inefficacy to save him.—"My will is made; I have left every thing to my darling child. My affairs in this

world are settled: send me a clergyman, that I may consider the rem prorsus substantialem."

From this moment he never lost his calmness and self-possession, nor uttered a word of repining at being so unexpectedly summoned from the world. After receiving the consolations of religion, he took an affecting leave of his friend and his family; reminded the almost heart-broken Constantia that he was only going to visit her dear mother, where they should await her joining them; and shortly after died as he had lived, with the confidence and fortitude of a virtuous and honest man.

CHAPTER II.

————— “Thou sure and firm-set earth !
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
The very stones prate of my where-about,
And take the present horror from the time,
Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives—
I go, and it is done ; the bell invites me.”

SHAKSPEARE.

ON the morning after the agitating conversation between Julia Strickland, and our hero, at Haelbeck, he made preparations for quitting that melancholy abode, and bidding adieu to its mysterious and world-severed inmates. For this purpose, he obtained an interview with the exile, whom he had not seen for several days, and whom he now found in a state of the deepest alarm and despondency, from an apprehension

that his departure, following so immediately upon the receipt of a letter, was connected with some plot for giving him up to his enemies.—“What, Sir!” he exclaimed, as Jocelyn approached, at the same time bringing his shaggy beard, and gaunt features close to him, “you are come to take another view of your victim, that you may swear to me with safety. Gaze your full, Sir; gaze on these wild eyes, this wan and haggard face, this wasted form, these feeble outward evidences of a wretchedness within, that defies a full expression of its intensity; then go, and give up this poor scared and heart-broken being to the blood-hounds that are seeking his life; to the hootings of an infuriated world; to a public gibbet; to posthumous infamy. You are capable of all this, because you are a man; likely to perpetrate it, because you have taken shelter beneath my roof, and shared my bread; almost certain to be guilty of it, because you have sworn secrecy, and have called yourself my

friend. Go, Sir, and act like yourself ; for you are a human being. You are of that mongrel race, which possesses the form of a god, with the mind and attributes of the blackest devil. Look at your victim once more, and then, be gone, you celestial dæmon !”

Jocelyn, who had never accosted him in such an angry mood, never witnessed such a paroxysm of misanthropy, was at a considerable loss what course to pursue, or what arguments to adduce, for allaying his apprehensions. He showed him the letter, containing the summons from his friend Tracy ; even offering to defer his departure, if his longer continuance at Haelbeck could contribute to the removal of his doubts : but the miserable man clung to his suspicions with all the tenacity of a morbid mind, until his wife appeared, and joined with Jocelyn in endeavouring to disabuse him of his error. Her tender and affectionate tones, her calmness and self-possession, seldom failed to soothe or shame him

out of his delusion: he received confidence as suddenly as he had lost it; and stretching out his hand to Jocelyn, exclaimed, "Forgive me, Sir; I insulted you by calling you a man, when you are, like myself, one of his victims; a sufferer from his baseness and injustice. You will not wonder that I loathe and spurn at the mischievous biped, when you reflect that disappointed hope turns to disgust, and unrequited affection to hatred. Farewell, Sir; I cannot wish you better than I wish myself; that you may be speedily released from a world that makes life a daily death, by laying your head in the tranquil grave, that makes death an eternal life."

Such was his parting with the misanthropical exile. His wife preserved her usual sedate dignity, blended with a cordiality of manners, and such fervent prayers for his happiness, as she bade him farewell, that he knew not which most to admire, the fortitude and even heroism with

which she endured her own sorrows, or the ardour with which she strove to alleviate those of others. Julia, she informed him, was too much indisposed to appear and bid him adieu; but she had charged her mother with the expression of her regard, and all cordial good-wishes for his prosperity and welfare.

Cheerless and repulsive as had appeared to Jocelyn the desolation of Haelbeck, and the mode of his reception upon his first arrival, his feelings upon quitting it partook much more of regret than of exhilaration. It was only when he thus tore himself away from her, that he felt how his heart lingered behind him, and longed to remain with Julia; while there appeared an unmanly sort of cruelty in leaving so young, beautiful, and vivacious a creature, to be buried alive, and suffered to wither away in that pestilent and watery sepulchre. Often did he accuse himself of cowardice and injustice in sacrificing the happiness, perhaps, of Julia, as well

as his own, to undefined apprehensions and vague prejudice. His better reason, however, convinced him, that he who means to live in the world must consult the feelings of society; that an alliance with an infamous family would never be recognised by his own; and that happiness seldom attends a union unsanctioned by public opinion, or the consent of relatives. Laying this unction to his soul, he hastened forward, lost in a thousand fruitless conjectures, as to the mystery that hung over the dark fate of Strickland, and occasionally diverting his thoughts to his own situation and prospects, and the most eligible mode of finding his way to England.

The disturbed state of Holland, and the peril to which he would be exposed, should he be recognised as the suspected English spy who had fled from the Burgomaster's house at Rotterdam, determining him to avoid that country altogether, he made a considerable detour, intending to embark at some port of the Spanish

Netherlands. On reaching his destined point, he could not find any vessel that would undertake to land him in England, the Dutch fleet being at that moment masters of the sea, and capturing every ship bound to the ports of their enemy. Disappointed in his first expectations, he betook himself to another harbour, where there was greater commerce, and, as he hoped, an additional chance of succeeding in his object; but here the same difficulties presented themselves, and a considerable interval elapsed, during which his finances became so much reduced, that he began to apprehend he should soon want the means of purchasing a passage, a contingency which he contemplated with the greater mortification, as it was now known that the English fleet had sailed from Harwich, and were in search of the Dutch squadron. A Flemish fisherman at length, who had a sister married to a tradesman at Stepney, undertook to carry him up the Thames, and land him at that place,

a proposition which was joyfully accepted, although the passage was to be made in an open boat; and they set sail the next day with a favourable breeze, which continued for some hours.

Upon the clearing up of the mist, early on the following morning, Jocelyn was not a little alarmed at finding himself in the midst of a numerous fleet of men-of-war, apprehensive that it might be the Dutch squadron, and not at all solicitous of being thrown into a prison in Holland. The fisherman, however, stoutly maintained that it was the English fleet. A shot from one of the ships, that flashed through the water a little a-head of them, quickly induced him to bring to, and run alongside the vessel whence it proceeded, when they were ordered on board, and Jocelyn had the satisfaction of finding himself in the Royal Oak, commanded by Sir John Lawson. Instead of the friendly greeting, however, which he expected, he met a rough and discourteous welcome, being told that

the circumstances under which he was encountered, coming from the opposite coast with a foreign fisherman, and concealing himself amidst them in a fog, gave him very much the appearance of being one of those refugee English, some of whom had already been detected acting as spies to the Dutch. Jocelyn, who thought it rather hard that he should be thus suspected by both parties of enacting a character which he held in particular abhorrence, indignantly recited his birth, parentage, and education, and made angry professions of his loyalty.

“You may be a spy for all that,” bluntly replied Sir John; “they are all apt to be plaguy loyal when detected: I should be sorry to run so well-timbered a fellow up at the yard-arm, but I cannot let you proceed without informing his Highness; so you may e’en go on board the Royal Charles, and make out your own story the best way you can.” One of the ship’s boats was accordingly lowered and manned, orders being given to the men to carry Jocelyn

and the Fleming on board the Flag ship, commanded by his Royal Highness the Duke of York. At the time of Jocelyn's mounting ladder of the Royal Charles, its illustrious commander was standing on the deck, attended by the Earl of Falmouth, Mr. Boyle, and Lord Muskerry,* the latter of whom fortunately knew our hero personally, and gladly vouched for his identity. The duke smiled at the over-vigilance of Sir John Lawson; and apologising very courteously for this interruption given to his voyage, informed Jocelyn he was at liberty to resume it whenever he thought fit. At the request of Lord Muskerry he remained on board while his lordship wrote a letter to his wife,† which our hero undertook to deliver;

* All three of whom were killed by one shot in the engagement that followed with the Dutch, on the 3d of June, 1665.

† Afterwards Vicountess Purbeck, well known as the Princesse de Babylon, in the lively pages of de Grammont, who visits her foibles with unsparing raillery, though he says nothing of that generous and magnificent spirit which ultimately led to the sale and disper-

and immediately upon receiving it reimbarked on board the fishing-boat, and continued his voyage for England.

It was well that the weather proved moderate and favourable, for the bark to which Jocelyn had entrusted himself was not calculated to inspire much confidence, although her owner availed himself of the unanswerable argument that she had never sunk with him yet, and it was not likely she would begin such pranks in her old age, and after so long an acquaintance. Had any fair plea been afforded her, it is not at all improbable she might have proved somewhat skittish in this respect; but, with the aid of a summer sky and propitious gales, they entered the mouth of the Thames in safety. After they had passed Gravesend, the voyagers began to wonder at the unusual accumulation of shipping in the river, and the great number of people in sion of all her vast estates. When the inhabitants of Tunbridge Wells are enjoying the shades of their noble Grove, they should recollect that they owe it to the munificence of that liberal-minded woman.

each vessel,—appearances that kept continually increasing as they reached London. Although the Fleming was not very loquacious, he did hail one or two of the craft they passed, but their crews cared not to answer them, and they passed on without parley to the neighbourhood of Stepney, where they both landed.

Here the mystery was presently solved, for Jocelyn learned, to his no small consternation, that the plague had been raging for some time in London, and that the many families they had seen afloat in their progress from Gravesend were citizens who had fled from the town, in the hope of avoiding the devastating infection, which, upon an average of the last nine weeks, had carried off a thousand every day. Uncertain how to act, and without other friends in London, he determined to proceed to Alderman Staunton's, in Aldersgate Street, in the hope of either gaining some tidings of Tracy, or learning how far he might venture to appear in public, without peril from the former order for his ar-

rest. But he was so appalled and horror-stricken at the dismal aspect of the death-devoted city as he advanced, that his courage failed him :—he was sick at heart ; and was once or twice upon the point of turning round and fleeing from a place which the Lord seemed to have doomed to become an Aceldama, and to be utterly delivered over to the destroying Angel. Even in those streets which were usually the most thronged, there was a dead and awful silence ; the grass grew rankly between the stones of Cornhill and Cheapside ; there were no carriages stirring, although it was mid-day ; and the few people that were seen moving about, here and there, walked in the middle of the road, for fear infection from the houses ; smelling to phials, chewing an antidote, or trusting to some philter, charm, or exorcism ; while, by the dumb terror of their looks and the quickness of their progress, they might rather be taken for gliding phantoms than human creatures.

Whole rows and streets of houses were shut

up, the greater part of them having a red cross, of a foot long, in the middle of the door ; over which was written : “ Lord have mercy upon us ! ” signifying that it had been visited by the examiners, and declared to be infected. To every such door, a large outside padlock was affixed, to prevent the escape of the diseased wretches within, as well as all access to them from without ; a watchman being appointed to keep guard at the door, and minister to the wants of the sufferers. Even the animal creation seemed to have partaken of the general doom ; not a dog or a cat was to be seen ; they had all been destroyed by order of the magistrates, for fear of their conveying the infection.

In his ignorance of the city, Jocelyn experienced considerable difficulty in finding the street he required. Several, to whom he had applied, had taken no other notice of his inquiry, than to quicken their pace, with a look of dismay ; smelling at the same time to their preventives with an additional eagerness. At length he saw two

persons approaching, holding red rods in their hands, whose more respectable appearance promised a more courteous attention to his request : but he was doomed to be again disappointed.— “ See you not the red wand ? ” said one of them, in answer to his inquiry ; “ and know you not that we are a surgeon and an examiner ? Are you weary of life, that you incur the risk of contagion, by stopping us on the highway ? Pass on ! pass on.” In this perplexity, since he could gain no information from the people in the streets, he looked about for some of the few houses that still remained open, intending to enter one of them and ask his way. Of these he had but little choice. They were mostly quack-doctors’ shops, plastered over with notices of “ Infallible Preventives against Plague ; the only true Plague-water ; the Incomparable Drink ; the Royal Antidote,” and similar flourishes : or shabby abodes, with the sign of Merlin, Mother Shipton, or Friar Bacon’s Brazen Head ; and inscriptions beneath : “ Here lives a fortune-tel-

ler ;” “ Here lives an astrologer ;” “ Here you may have your nativity calculated.”

While Jocelyn was gazing at a cognizance of the latter description, a cadaverous-looking fellow, in a velvet jacket, a band, and a black cloak, came to the door, and invited him to walk in ; offering to tell him, for a shilling, whether he was to die or not of the plague.

“ If I may judge from your own appearance, my good friend,” said Jocelyn, “ you can hardly answer favourably for yourself.* Here is your shilling, but I want no higher specimen of your skill than that you will tell me the way to Aldersgate Street.” This information was correctly furnished, and he left the egregious wizard wondering more at the avarice which could lead him to expose his life for a shilling, than at the delusion of the diseased wretches, who caught at straws as they were sinking into the grave,

* It was observed that the greater number of these astrologers and quack conjurers perished, as was indeed to be expected, from their more frequent intercourse with the infected.

and could not, perhaps, better expend that trifling sum than in the purchase of a few hours' hope. Following the directions he had received, he turned out of Cheapside, which he had scarcely quitted, when he encountered an apparently delirious creature, naked from the waist upwards, walking with a swift pace, his eyes fixed, a countenance full of horror, and repeatedly exclaiming in a voice of agony: "O the great and dreadful God!" From the information of a watchman, who proved more communicative than the rest of his brethren, Jocelyn learned that this poor wretch continued this dismal cry night and day, and that he was never seen to stop, or rest, or take any sustenance. Oppressed in spirits, and not insensible to the risk he was running by thus walking in the midst of the pestilence, he at length saw with satisfaction the name of Aldersgate Street written upon the corner of a house; but his feelings were doomed to a severer shock in this quarter than any he had hitherto experienced. While he was yet

gazing upon the house, the casement was suddenly opened by a female of elegant appearance, who uttered three frightful screeches, and then cried: "Oh! death! death! death!" in a tone that thrilled every drop of blood in his veins: after which, she struck her hands distractedly together, and reeled backwards into the room! Her shrieks echoed hollowly through the wide street, in which there was not at that moment a soul moving except Jocelyn. No other casement was opened—no notice was taken of her appalling shrieks: people were too much accustomed to such sounds of agony, to pay them more than a momentary attention.

Aghast and horror-stricken he passed on, in vain looking for some one who might inform him which was Alderman Staunton's house, until a watchman, returning to a door which he had momentarily quitted, pointed to a large mansion on the opposite side of the way; adding that the inquirer must be a stranger indeed in that part of London, not to know where Master Staunton

lived. After having knocked twice at the door of the house indicated, a servant appeared at the balcony over the entrance, and informed him, in answer to his inquiries, that the alderman, after having supplied himself with provisions, had locked up the doors several weeks ago, since which he held communication with no one, and suffered neither ingress nor egress. This precaution, as Jocelyn subsequently found, had been practised by several other families, and in most cases proved effectual. He desired that his name might be conveyed to the alderman; but being assured it would be utterly unavailing in inducing him to grant him an interview, he inquired which [was the nearest place where he could find a lodging, at least for a night or two. “There is the Moses and Aaron public-house, at the corner of Jewin Street,” replied the man, “and there is a lodging-house only two doors off; but whether they will take you in at present I cannot say.”

To the latter our hero betook himself in pre-

ference ; and, ringing at the bell, was answered by a woman from the window, who asked him what he wanted. He answered that he had just arrived from abroad, in total ignorance of the contagion ; and, being disappointed of a residence in the house of his friend, Alderman Staunton, was in want of a lodging. “Have you a pass from Sir John Lawrence, the lord mayor, or a certificate of health ?” inquired the woman. “I have nothing,” he replied, “but a receipt for my luggage and effects, which were only landed this morning at Stepney, as you may see by the date of the paper :” and he held it up in confirmation of his statement. “Your ruddy face is the best certificate of health,” said the woman ; “and I were base and ungrateful indeed, to shut my door against any friend of the worthy alderman, to whose bounty I am indebted even for the house in which I live. Come in.” The door was presently opened ; and, as he entered, the woman ejaculated, “May God spare this house, and all that are in it !” to which Jocelyn replied,

“Amen !” and with this solemn welcome he was ushered into the parlour.

At that period of general mortality and depopulation, persons were not easily found to perform the menial offices of life, and even where they could be had, many preferred executing the most servile duties themselves, to the risk consequent upon the employment of a stranger. Participating in this feeling, Jocelyn set off the next morning for Stepney, in order to make arrangements for getting his effects conveyed to his present lodgings, as he intended to quit London, without delay, as soon as he could learn tidings of Tracy, or ascertain where the Court were fixed. The Court had, in the first instance, removed to Hampton, for the purpose of avoiding the infection ; but deeming its vicinity to the metropolis objectionable, they had subsequently withdrawn to Salisbury ; and it was now rumoured that they were about to fly from that city, and establish themselves at Oxford. At Brambletye he was loth to present

himself, until he could appease the irritated Sir John with some prospect of his restoration to favour; and he had, moreover, a vehement objection against again encountering the welcome of such a step-mother as the Juffrouw. Warned by the woman of the house where he lodged, against entering any of the hackney-coaches, many of which had been employed in conveying infected persons, he set out for Stepney on foot, meeting the same desolating sights as had appalled him on the day before. Some were weeping, sobbing, and wringing their hands; some shrieked aloud in an uncontrollable agony; others were walking forwards with uplifted hands, praying and calling upon God for mercy; and in Leadenhall Street he met the enthusiast Solomon Eagle, naked from the waist upwards, like the poor wretch of the day before, bearing a pan of burning charcoal on his head, and crying aloud, as Jonah did to Nineveh, "Yet a few days, and London shall be destroyed!"

All those who heard him seemed to be

astounded by his awful manner and terrible denunciations. Whenever he stopped he pointed to the sky; and the poor panic-stricken creatures that followed him, fell into ecstasies of terror as they looked upwards, crying out that they saw hearses and coffins in the air, and heaps of dead bodies lying unburied, and a naked sword with the point downwards ready to fall upon their heads, and the bare arm of the Lord stretched forth from the heavens and pouring out the phial of his wrath over the devoted city. Indeed it appeared to Jocelyn that the plague had extended itself to the faculties of the people, the contagion having often completely disordered the minds of those who had hitherto preserved their bodies from infection.

In the melancholy frame of mind which such scenes might be naturally supposed to inspire, he found his way to Stepney, where he was obliged to wait for several hours; the woman to whom he had entrusted his effects having gone to Deptford with her brother the fisherman.

Upon her return a fresh difficulty presented itself. The neighbourhood of Aldersgate Street was represented to him as being more dreadfully visited by the pestilence than any other quarter, and few even of the common people cared to expose themselves to the jeopardy of approaching it. A handsome reward, which completely exhausted his attenuated purse, at last induced a sailor to procure a barrow, and offer to wheel home his effects ; but so much time had been lost in this negociation, that the evening was already closing in when they started.

The public fires which had been ordered to be lighted in different quarters of the city, under the notion of their purifying the atmosphere, now cast a ghastly glare upon the sickly wretches that occasionally gathered about them. The rakers were going their rounds, blowing a horn, to give notice to the inhabitants that they should bring out the sweepings and filth of their houses, which these men were appointed to collect every evening, lest new

infection should be generated : and as the darkness increased he began to encounter a still more revolting spectacle,—the carts that went the nightly round of every parish, the driver sounding a large bell, and his comrades, in the intervals of its noise, uttering the doleful cry of “ Bring out your dead ! bring out your dead ! ” The continual stoppages of the vehicle, the sickening sight of the corpses, brought down in the habiliments in which the parties had died, and tossed promiscuously in, one upon another, by wretches whom custom had rendered callous, the general wailings, lamentations, and shrieks of the surviving relatives, as the bell again sounded and the cart drove off, would have been sufficiently harrowing to his feelings, without the examples of individual agony from which he was unable at times to withdraw his eyes, although they were almost withered at the sight.

In one place a mother, wildly following the cart that contained her only son, disregarded all the solicitations and even menaces of the drivers

and with distracted cries ordered them to give her back her child ; in another, a man had rushed from his bed half naked, and run into the streets in a state of delirium, dancing and singing, and making a thousand antic gestures, followed by his distressed family weeping and calling upon him for the Lord's sake to come back, and beseeching the assistance of others to compel him ; but all in vain, nobody daring to approach, still less to lay hands upon him, for fear of infection. In passing Aldgate church-yard he was attracted by the sight of numerous links ; and an impulse of momentary curiosity inducing him to gaze through the iron railings, he beheld several buriers surrounding a huge pit, into which two of the dead-carts were at that moment emptying their contents. In following one of these vehicles he had observed a man walking behind it, wrapped up in a cloak, and apparently a prey to intense though silent grief : and from the conversation of the drivers, he had gathered, that this unfortunate being, having al-

ready buried his wife, was now following three children, being the whole of his family, to the grave. As the cart entered the church-yard he had for a moment disappeared; but as the bodies of his children were shot into the pit, he suddenly rushed forward, and with a dreadful cry threw himself into the midst of the yawning and pestiferous abyss.

Jocelyn could gaze no more, his senses were bewildered; and when he was at last enabled to continue his progress, he determined to cast his eyes as little as possible either to the right or the left, lest they should be scared by some new object of horror. In great consternation and sickness of soul, he at last reached his lodging-house in Aldersgate Street, discharged his porter, carried his effects into his own room, and betook himself immediately to bed, not less fatigued in body, than saddened and subdued in spirit.

The shock that his feelings had received, and a deep sense of his individual danger, induced him to form two immediate resolutions—to con-

fine himself to the house while he remained in London—and to quit it with all speed for Oxford, where he had now ascertained that the Court were stationed. The latter object could not be accomplished without money, of which he had not a shilling left; and he was therefore reduced to the necessity, though not without some feeling of humiliation, of stating his situation to his landlady, and requesting her to advance him what he wanted upon the security of his diamond-hilted sword. This proposition the generous woman instantly rejected; it was enough that he was the friend of Alderman Staunton, her benefactor; his receipt was all that she required: and this being given, she delivered to him in gold a sum much more than adequate to the expenses of his contemplated journey. With a friendly solicitude for his safety, she most earnestly dissuaded him from trusting himself to any mode of conveyance that might expose him to the company of other people; adding that she daily, almost hourly,

expected the arrival of her son, who was traveller to a mercantile house in Little Britain, and whose horse should be at Jocelyn's service, as soon as it had had a day's rest after its journey. To this proposition he thought it most prudent to assent; and as he was resolved not to stir from the house, he requested she would lend him what books she might possess, to assist him in beguiling the time. These were accordingly sent into his apartment, but they were little calculated to exhilarate his spirits, consisting mostly of the superstitious effusions and pamphlets which the plague had drawn forth—such as “Britain's Remembrancer”—“Fair Warning”—“Come out of her, my people, lest ye be partaker of her plagues,”—and similar productions. To these were added Lilly's and Poor Robin's almanacks, Gadbury's Predictions,” and numerous infallible directions for avoiding plague and infection, most of them written by empirics, who had been swept away themselves while they were pretending to save others.

Not deriving any very great consolation or amusement from these specimens of her library, Jocelyn awaited with great impatience the arrival of her son. At that period of general panic, the smallest indisposition was contemplated with misgiving and alarm; and his landlady could hardly speak her agitation when she informed him next morning that one of the maid-servants had complained of head-ach and nausea, adding a devout prayer to Heaven that it might not prove the pestilence. Jocelyn conversed with the girl on the subject of her complaint, which appeared to him of a trifling nature, and which she herself treated as a momentary indisposition; but her mistress, whose apprehensions remained unabated, determined on calling in medical advice.

Early on the following morning the son returned, to whom his mother explained the promise she had made Jocelyn of lending his horse for a journey to Oxford, which he willingly confirmed, only stipulating that the animal

should rest till the morrow. On the evening of that day, our hero learned with infinite perturbation of mind, both on his landlady's account and his own, that the maid's complaint had been decidedly pronounced to be the plague; and as it was now evident that not a moment was to be lost, he put the most precious of his effects, together with the money he had borrowed, into a small travelling portmanteau, intending to rise with the morrow's sun, buckle the portmanteau to his horse's crupper, and turn his back upon the death-doomed city of London.

Long before the sun had appeared above the horizon, he was up and accoutered; and having slung his valise over his shoulders, and descended the stairs just as the dawn was breaking, and ere any other inmate of the house had arisen, he proceeded to the street-door, drew back the bolts, unlocked it, and attempted to let himself out. The door, however, refused to open; and while he was wondering what this

might mean, a voice from the other side called out to inquire what was wanting.—“ I want to pass out,” cried Jocelyn.

“ Out !” replied the voice—“ Know you not that the examiner has put the red cross, and the “ Lord have mercy upon us !” on the door ? It is padlocked up, and not a soul passes out except the nurse, while I am watchman !”

It is utterly impossible to describe the dismay that struck upon the heart of Jocelyn, courageous as it generally was, when he heard these doleful tidings. He had been previously exhilarated at the prospect of immediate escape to the pure and renovating air of the country : and now to be shut up and imprisoned with infected people ; to be uselessly exposed to all the horrors of this hideous pestilence, without being allowed to make a struggle for his life ; to be condemned by this absurd regulation, and in the flower of his youth, to a miserable and inglorious death—it was a fate very, very, very dreadful to endure ; and its unnecessary inflict-

tion was not less cruel and tyrannical. The latter feeling soon predominated over the former; indignation superseded alarm; and resolving, in the vehemence of his resentment, to refuse obedience to this worst of all incarcerations, he determined to wait till the dusk of the evening, let himself down from one of the windows, and run the risk of losing his life in a scuffle with the watchman, rather than tamely sacrifice it within the doors to the assaults of the pestilence.

Consoled by this decision, he returned to his own room, where he had not long remained, when he heard a cry of distress from one of the upper apartments; and upon calling to inquire the cause, was answered by one of the maids, that her fellow servant was dead, and their mistress complained of being exceedingly ill. "Where is her son?" inquired Jocelyn. "He was absent from home when the house was padlocked up," replied the maid, "and we have not heard of him since."

“Is there no one else in the house?” again inquired Jocelyn.

“Not a soul, but yourself,” answered the maid, “but we have sent for a nurse, and expect one this morning:” at which words she closed the door, and the conversation ceased.

However distressing it might be to leave the landlady and her maid in this piteous plight, he knew that any attendance or assistance that he might proffer, would only endanger himself, without availing the sufferers; such offices, besides, would come with much more propriety from the expected nurse; and this rapid increase of the danger only confirmed him in his resolution of flying from it. Towards noon he heard the physician arrive, and go up-stairs, followed, not long after, by the nurse, who took her station in the landlady’s room; but Jocelyn forbore from all inquiries, not expecting to receive any consolatory tidings, and anxious to avoid all communication with parties coming from an infected chamber. He had examined one of the windows,

from which he calculated upon being able to let himself down without difficulty ; but to guard against every possibility of mischance or disappointment, he provided himself with a stout rope, long enough to serve his purpose, even should he be compelled to try one of the back windows, which were considerably higher.

Evening seemed to be unusually long in arriving, but it at length approached ; and as he sate in his chair, he watched the gathering gloom with the satisfaction of one who is about to escape from a hateful imprisonment, that was to be quickly terminated by a death, at which the soul recoils. At last it appeared dark enough to ensure his escape without detection ; and he was about to spring from his seat, and hasten to the window, when he was seized with a sudden vertigo, accompanied with an inexpressible nausea and sickness, and fell backwards in his chair. After a few moments it seemed, in some degree, to pass away, and he again attempted to rise, but he felt such a sudden prostration of strength,

that he found himself unable to stand without support, and utterly inadequate to the task of even walking across the room; so that he again sunk down in his chair, the agony of his disappointment being aggravated by the dreadful conviction that he was smitten by the plague.

His voice still remained to him, and hearing some one passing down the stairs, he called for help. It proved to be the nurse, a forbidding-looking hag, who shook her head when she saw him, told him the only thing he could do was to betake himself to his bed, which she assisted him in reaching, complained that she should have enough to attend to, since the second maid was ill as well as the mistress, and she was now likely to have the lodger upon her hands; and adding that she would send the doctor to him when he called next morning; she bade him keep himself quiet in his bed, and not ring the bell; and immediately quitted the apartment.

Nothing but absolute helplessness could have compelled him to obey this last injunction, for

such was his combined horror of the disease, and of the villanous physiognomy of the bel-dame who was to have the nursing of him, that he would have thrown himself from the topmost window of the house, rather than remain in it, had his will been seconded by his ability. But he continued powerless as a child, his body suffering from fever, giddiness, and intense head-ach, while his mind was a prey to forebodings that soon sank his spirit into the deepest despondency. Lying upon his bed in this forlorn plight, he heard, as night approached, the rumbling of the revolting cart, the tolling of the bell, and the doleful cry of "Bring out your dead!" It stopped at the door of the house; one of the buriers helped the nurse to carry down the dead body of the maid; he heard it thrown in, the bell again began ringing, and the vehicle was driven on, though the horrid sounds seemed to be still vibrating in his ears, long after the cart had quitted the street, and was beyond his hearing.

After broken and uneasy slumbers, he awoke the next morning feverish and unrefreshed, mortified at the continued debility that rendered flight impossible, and most anxious to see the physician, that he might know the exact nature of his complaint, and what fate he was to expect. Long and eagerly did he listen for the sound of his footsteps, and his heart beat rapidly as he heard him at length ascending the stairs. After having first visited the landlady, he entered Jocelyn's apartment, and standing at some distance from the bed, with a smelling-bottle at his nose, he inquired the symptoms of the complaint, and desired to see the patient's breast. This he had no sooner beheld, than, recoiling several steps, he exclaimed, "There are the blue plague-spots ! Lord have mercy upon us ! you are a dead man ! I will send the nurse to you : " at which words he hurried out of the chamber.

Our hero, as we have before taken occasion to remark, was constitutionally courageous ; his

decided and impetuous character rendered him, indeed, impatient of suspense, and sensitive to any impending and undefined danger ; but it no sooner assumed a distinct form, than he eyed it undismayed, and prepared himself to encounter it with a manly fortitude. While the attack of the distemper was uncertain, while there was a chance of escaping from the house, his apprehensions were keen, his eagerness for flight incessant ; but now that there was no hope of avoiding the one, or effecting the other, the painful excitement of his mind subsided into resignation, and he gave over all thoughts of struggling with his inevitable fate. To the nurse, indeed, his antipathy remained unconquerable ; and, as some hours elapsed without her appearance, he began to hope that he should be suffered to perish without being revolted by her hateful presence.

During this interval his thoughts reverted often and painfully to the beautiful, the vivacious, the fascinating, Julia Strickland, whose

joyous soul, diffusing sunshine all around it, contrasted fearfully with the gloom of his present situation, and the character of the sepulchral hag, whose ministerings he was fated to endure. It was as if he looked back upon the bright visions of Paradise, from the very depths of doom and despair. That he should think of her at all, at such a moment, proved to him how deeply she was rooted in his heart; while it embittered his regret, to reflect, that if he had followed the dictates of a more generous, and world-defying feeling, by making her his wife, he would, in all probability, have ensured his permanent happiness, and would certainly have avoided the loathsome and premature death with which he was now threatened.

While he was lost in these reveries of a felicity, which he reproached himself with having so wantonly thrown away, he was disturbed by the entrance of the nurse, who came to inform him that the landlady had just breathed her last, and that from the appearance of the remaining

maid, it was doubtful whether she would hold out through the night ; adding, that if his disorder did not exhibit some favourable turn, of which she saw no symptoms at present, there was likely to be a clear house by the morrow, or the next day at farthest. At the conclusion of this unfeeling speech, she placed a potion by his bedside, which, she said, had been ordered by the physician, and at his earnest solicitation that she would attend to her patient up stairs, and leave him to his fate, she sullenly quitted his apartment.

Again was the unfortunate Jocelyn doomed to listen to the same sickening sounds, as on the night before ; while the body of the landlady was carried down to the plague-cart, and wheeled away to the undistinguishing receptacles of the dead ; and again were his early slumbers broken by the nauseous and revolting creations of a diseased body and a distempered fancy. Towards the morning, however, he obtained some more refreshing sleep ; and, although his debility re-

mained unabated, he could not help imagining, when he awoke, that there was some little subsiding in his disorder. A faint ray of hope sprung up in his heart, and he eagerly awaited the arrival of the physician, trusting to receive from him some confirmation of a favourable change having occurred. While he was nourishing these pleasant auguries, the ill-featured and ill-omened nurse came to disperse them, by croaking in his ear that the second maid had just departed ; and that, a little before her death, she had experienced exactly similar sensations of imaginary convalescence. “ The physician, who will shortly be here,” said Jocelyn, “ will be enabled to pronounce better than I can myself, and, till his arrival, I will dispense with your attendance.”

“ Marry, come up !” cried the woman, with a scowling look, “ there be many would rather have the room than the company of a fellow in the plague ; I have no one else to attend now, and so I shall suit my own convenience.” She disappeared, slamming the door after her, and

while Jocelyn was waiting the arrival of the physician, with an impatience generated by returning hope, he thought he heard her, at times, opening the closets, and pulling out the drawers in the room above him. Hour after hour dragged heavily on ; and yet the physician came not, a circumstance at which he expressed his surprise to the nurse, when she next made her appearance. “ There is nothing surprising in the matter,” she replied ; “ many of the doctors ran away in the first instance ; many who had determined to remain, are daily taking flight, and following them : some are carried off by the plague, and the few that remain, have so many patients to attend, that you are never sure of them. It is quite too late to expect him to-day. Perhaps he may look in to-morrow, but I doubt whether you will hold out so long.”

During the utterance of this consolatory opinion, she made arrangements in the grate, as if for the purpose of lighting a fire. “ Good heavens !” exclaimed Jocelyn, “ you are not, surely,

going to increase the heat of the room, when I am already suffering from fever."

"Your sufferings will soon be over," said the hag, "and it is better to think of the living than the dead. Fire keeps off infection; and, besides, I may as well dress my supper here, as be running up and down stairs." Jocelyn declared that he would much rather be without her attendance, and implored her to desist; but argument and expostulation were alike thrown away, and she proceeded in her work, without even deigning to notice his objections. Had her patient been in good health, this was precisely an occasion when he would have been seized with one of those fits of coler, to which he was occasionally liable: he was, indeed, somewhat irate in spirit, but reflecting that submission was his only alternative, in his present helpless state, he suffered her to proceed without farther parley. Spite of her sinister predictions, his sensations fortified him in the belief of some change in his malady, and availing himself of her next absence,

from the chamber, he yielded to a drowsy sensation that oppressed him, and fell fast asleep.

After some hours he was awakened by a noise, which he found to be the snoring of his nurse. It was now night. On the blazing fire was a saucepan containing some concoction for her supper; two candles, with long unsnuffed wicks were flaring on a table, upon which were also placed the preparations for her meal, a large knife and fork, and a flask of spirits. The gaunt and bony hag was stretched in an arm-chair, her head supported by a pillow, and her feet resting on the fender. While he was gazing at the scene before him she awoke, and having ascertained the hour by a watch which she took from her pocket, and which he recollected to have belonged to the landlady, she cast a scrutinizing glance towards the bed. An impulse of mingled suspicion and curiosity, induced Jocelyn still to counterfeit sleep; she brought one of the candles close to his face, as if to assure herself of the fact, and again retired

towards the fire-place, apparently convinced that she was unobserved.

Peering through his nearly-closed eyes he now saw her take a key from the mantel-piece, unlock his portmanteau, and rummage amid its contents, whence she drew forth the purse of gold he had borrowed from the landlady, the miniature of the queen, and his diamond-hilted sword, the two former of which she deposited upon the table, and held the latter to the light, as if to ascertain whether they were real brilliants. A glare of horrid satisfaction passed over her features as she recognized the value of the prize, and Jocelyn, who began to think she meditated something more atrocious than robbery, was not at all dissatisfied at seeing her wrap up the weapon in a cloak, and hide it in the closet. He had not long, however, to congratulate himself, for she had no sooner gently shut the closet-door, than she took up the pillow on which she had been sleeping, and, advancing two or three steps on

tiptoe, she at length sprang, like a tigress, upon her prey, leaping upon the bed, and covering over Jocelyn's face with the pillow, upon which she then leant the whole weight of her body, with the intention of smothering him.

So sudden and unexpected was the assault, that he had not time to elude it, but weakened as he was, he struggled violently for his life, and by a prodigious effort, in which nature summoned all her remaining energies, he succeeded in extricating himself from the pillow, crying out at the same time, as loudly as his strength permitted—"Help! murder! murder!"

"Noisy fool!" said the fury, renewing her attack—"there is no one to hear you; and if there were, they have long ceased to notice such cries. Murder, indeed! when you are a dead man already! Here 's a coil about two or three hours of life!"—Again she forced him down with the pillow—his struggles became fainter and fainter—his groans and cries were no longer audible—she pressed with in-

creased violence upon his mouth—respiration was stopped—and the beldame thought her fell purpose was accomplished; when the door opened, and a stately female figure, attired in black, and holding a lamp in her right hand, glided suddenly into the chamber.

At sight of this apparition, the hag, uttering a shout of terror, threw down the pillow, rushed through an opposite door, flew down the stairs, and burst out of the house.

CHAPTER III.

“ This is a creature
Would she begin a sect might quench the zeal
Of all professors else,—make proselytes
Of whom she bid but follow.”

SHAKSPEARE.

ON recovering his senses, and again opening his eyes, Jocelyn beheld a beautiful vision standing by his bed-side, and holding a cordial to his lips, which, with a dulcet voice, she entreated him to drink. Still bewildered in his faculties, he knew not at first whether he were under the influence of some delightful dream, or whether he had indeed passed through the gate of death, and was invited to quaff from the chalice of immortality by one of the angels of heaven. His lips moved in faint endeavours to speak, but finding himself too much ex-

hausted to articulate a word, he obeyed in silence the behest of the ministering spirit. Invigorated by the cordial, he gathered strength enough to exclaim, as he again leant back upon the pillow—"Gracious Heaven! am I in a dream, or is it, indeed, Constantia Beverning?"

"Compose yourself," replied Constantia, "and do not attempt to speak. You have been wonderfully preserved. The hand of the Lord has been stretched forth to save you: let us call upon him to complete the work of mercy, for no arm of flesh can turn aside the dart of death that is still hovering over you."—Kneeling down by his bed-side, she drew forth a book of prayer, and with a countenance irradiated by holy fervour, and a voice whose inimitable sweetness rendered the solemn earnestness of its expression still more emphatic, she proceeded to read extracts from the ninety-first psalm:—

"I will say unto the Lord, Thou art my hope and my strong hold, my God, in whom will I trust. For He shall deliver thee from the

snare of the hunter, and from the noisome pestilence.—He shall defend thee under his wings, and thou shalt be safe under his feathers: his faithfulness and truth shall be thy shield and buckler.—Thou shalt not be afraid for any terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day.—For the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the sickness that destroyeth in noon day.—A thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand at thy right hand.—He shall call upon me, and I will hear him: yea, I am with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and bring him to honour.—With long life will I satisfy him, and show him my salvation.”

She closed the book, and casting up her large and glorious eyes to heaven, commenced an extempore prayer, which fell from her lips with a fine spontaneous eloquence, that nothing but deep feeling and fervent piety could inspire. Jocelyn's right hand was extended, powerless, upon the bed. She took it up in the midst of her supplications, pressed it between both of

her's, and, lifting it upwards, implored Heaven, with an increased enthusiasm, to allay the disease that throbbed in its veins, and restore it to its strength. He thought that a tear glistened in her eye, as she felt the fever burning within him. At any other time, and in any other female, there might have appeared some impropriety in the action; but the pure and sanctified thoughts of Constantia at that moment were unmixed with any earthly feeling; and Jocelyn knew that she was defying death, rather than courting any of the considerations of life, when in the sublime heroism of her devotion she pressed his infected hand. Not having, however, the power to withdraw it, he yielded it passively to her control, looking on, and listening to her accents, with a mingled impression of amazement at her presence, and of pious confidence in the efficacy of her intercessions.

At the conclusion of her prayer she arose, and seeing Jocelyn about to speak, she laid her finger upon her lips, to enjoin silence. She then

placed a silver flask by his bed-side, of which she desired him to drink whenever he should awake in the night; and calling upon Heaven once more to bless and deliver him from the pestilence, she vanished from the room, promising, however, to revisit him in the morning.

Jocelyn remained for a long time lost in the most perplexing and contradictory speculations. That she should be in England at all, when the two countries were involved in war—that she should have discovered his abode, for he could not suppose her appearance to have been accidental—that she should have been able to gain admittance to the house, barricadoed as it was—and that she should have presented herself at the very moment when he was at the last gasp of life, to chase away his intended murderess by her presence—presented a combination of mysteries, which he was still vainly endeavouring to unravel, when he yielded to the influence of the powerful opiate he had swallowed, and sunk into a deep refreshing sleep,

from which he did not awake until the following morning. Even his returning recollection, and a sensation of renovated strength, could hardly persuade him that the scene of the preceding night was other than a frightful dream, until his eyes fell upon the silver flask, with whose grateful contents he again refreshed himself, and awaited in patience the return of his fair visitant. The conviction that some favourable change had occurred in his complaint, combined with a night of unbroken sleep, had so exhilarated his mind, that, although he had lately contemplated death with the resignation of despair, he now clung to the thought of protracted existence, with all the eagerness of rekindled hope.

While he was indulging these delicious reveries, Constantia made her appearance, and inquired after the health of her patient, who stated his confident belief that the crisis of his disease was over, and that he might venture to pronounce himself a convalescent. "It is well," she replied: "these are, indeed, joyful tidings,

that call upon us to repeat the medicine, to which alone, under God, so merciful a relief can be ascribed ;” and she fell upon her knees, pouring forth thanksgivings for the favour that had been vouchsafed, and imploring the perfect re-establishment of his health, with a fervour and beauty of holiness, not less conspicuous than in the devotions of the preceding night.

This duty being discharged, she sate down by the bed-side, and casting her eyes upon the ground, thus addressed him, in a calm and solemn voice. “ It is soothing to me, to believe that Heaven, by thus having listened to my prayers, is not displeased with the part I have been acting ; it is an inexpressible consolation to my heart, to know that I have been the instrument of saving your life, and of calling you, as I trust the event will prove, to a redeeming sense of the mercy you have experienced. But I feel that some explanation is necessary ; I fear that, however you may have been benefited by my interference, it may strike you as a deviation

from that strict observance of decorum, which is so inexorably prescribed to our sex. 'This dreadful pestilence, with which we have been visited, instead of chastening the minds of the people, has only loosened the bonds of morality, and too many have been found to say, 'let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.' Irresponsibility has engendered crime; precariousness of existence has been rendered an excuse for increased voluptuousness and sensuality. And thus it has ever been. Boccacio could imagine no more fitting occupation for the most intellectual natives of Florence, during the great plague, than to luxuriate in delicious gardens, and dedicate the few hours that might be left them, to dalliance, revelry, and licentious story-telling. You will not confound me with these. I would not deviate from the established forms of society into folly or profligacy; but I would depart from them at all times, and more especially at a moment like the present, when I can in any way contribute by their violation to the welfare of

my fellow-creatures ; not to lose myself, but to save another, do I now disregard the fastidious ordinances of mankind. This is the clue to my conduct. What I have done for you, I should have felt it my duty to perform for a stranger, though I frankly confess that it enhances my pleasure to have contributed to the preservation of Mr. Compton."

Jocelyn declared that his previous knowledge of her character would have precluded his assigning any other than the purest and noblest motives to her conduct, and implored her to give him credit for a deep and indelible sense of gratitude, both to Heaven, and to herself ; though he was still at a loss to account for the circumstances of her most providential appearance, in the very crisis of his fate.

"That," said Constantia, "is easily explained : at the breaking out of the plague, I was visiting at Alderman Staunton's, and knowing the efficacy of the measure, by our own previous experience, when visited with this calamity at

Rotterdam, I recommended him to shut up the doors of his residence, and cut off all communication from without. Some years ago, he had nearly lost his life from a fire, and as this and the intervening house are his own property, as well as the one he inhabits, he constructed a railed communication upon the roof, to facilitate escape, should he be exposed to a similar peril ; and along this gallery, being debarred all other opportunities of air and exercise, his family have been accustomed to walk. Invited by the warmth of the weather, I took my lamp, and was pacing along it last night, when just as I reached its extremity, methought I heard a faint cry of distress. This house, like many others, has a small circular room upon the top of it, for the purpose of smoaking tobacco. I lifted up one of the sashes—the cries were continued—I stepped into the room, and hurrying to the apartment whence the sounds proceeded, was fortunate enough to rescue you from the grasp of the harpy by whom you were assailed.”

“ Any other female than Constantia Beverning,” said Jocelyn, “ would have been deterred by the fear of danger, even if she had not been appalled by the paramount dread of infection ; and I shudder when I think to what risk your generous courage may have exposed you.”

“ Yielding to the impulse of the moment,” replied Constantia, “ no apprehensions entered my mind, nor do they disturb me now, for I am provided with an antidote which effectually preserved me in Holland, although I braved the fury of the distemper by visiting many of my poorer pensioners, when they were suffering from its attack. I am no inexperienced doctress in this complaint, and I undertake to pronounce that you cannot communicate it, for it has already left you. You will recover, but you will still need a nurse, and I am bound to supply that character, since it was I who chased away your former attendant. Indeed you have a double claim upon my services, for it was by my advice that the Alderman closed up his doors ;

I thus became the unintentional author of your expulsion from his house."

"Were you, then, aware that I had made application for admittance?" inquired Jocelyn.

"The servant to whom you applied," answered Constantia, blushing, "mentioned your name, adding that he had seen you enter our neighbour's lodging-house."

"Then your astonishment at our meeting was not of course so lively as my own," observed Jocelyn.

"Our servant had seen you again quit the house," said Constantia, fixing her eyes upon the ground, "and had not marked your return, so that I had reason to hope you were no longer its inmate. But I must not thus neglect my patient: I have brought you another cordial, whose influence, I trust, will be not less salutary than the last; and two books calculated to afford you consolation and recreation. Body and mind will be thus jointly restored, and at my return this afternoon I hope to find that my patient has

done justice to both my prescriptions. Farewell !” The volume intended for his consolation was the Bible ; the other, which was also in folio, was Pharamond, one of those chivalrous romances of Walter de Calprenede, which found peculiar favour in Constantia’s eyes, because it sublimised the passion of love into a quintessence of refinement, much better adapted to angelic natures than to those of flesh and blood.

In the statement she had made to Jocelyn there was nothing disengenuous ; a noble and proud candour was her distinguishing characteristic ; but there was an omission, of which she was perhaps herself unconscious, although it would have helped to explain her opportune appearance in the extremity of his danger. Her averment might be true, that she would have rushed to the assistance of a stranger with equal alacrity, had she heard his cries : but for a stranger she would not have been hovering about the house in which she imagined him to dwell ; she would not have haunted the gallery early and

late that conducted to it ; she would not have been in a perpetual agitation and alarm, from the first moment that she had observed his abode to be marked by a red cross, although she had no actual certainty that the object of her solicitude was a prisoner within it. Such had been the life of Constantia : the restlessness and anxiety of her heart had continually suggested some new pretext for visiting the gallery : fifty times a day had she listened for some sound, or peered through the windows of the circular room to discover some object ; and her presence, at the identical moment when it was required, was solely attributable to this vigilance of affection. Her life she might have risked to succour any other person, if suddenly called upon to expose it ; but her hopes and fears,—her head, her heart, and her time, could not have been thus exclusively engrossed by any one but Jocelyn.

To him it was evident, from what he had heard, that she was aware of his being her neighbour ; and when he combined her gene-

rous defiance of danger and of calumny, the devotedness with which she had pressed his infected hand, and her enthusiastic prayers for his recovery, with the provident and unremitting attention that anticipated every want, as she anxiously watched over him in his convalescence, he felt himself driven to the painful conclusion, that she could never have thus dedicated herself to his preservation, unless she had been actuated by a passion which he felt it impossible to return. His gratitude was unbounded; he would gladly have sacrificed in her service the life that she had saved; but his affections it was no longer in his power to bestow, for he felt, when returning to life, as he had done when he imagined himself to be dying, that, however hopeless might be the attachment, his whole undivided heart was with Julia Strickland, in the melaucholy castle of Haelbeck.

Deeply impressed with this conviction, and anxious to undeceive Constantia as soon as pos-

sible, if she imagined his affections to be disengaged, he determined to impart to her the state of his feelings with reference to her friend Julia, and inquire whether she could enable him to follow up the dictates of his heart, by throwing any light upon the dark cloud that hung over the fate of Mr. Strickland. Love and curiosity, both of which were sufficiently ardent in his bosom, might thus be gratified at once; and if his communication produced no other result, it would at least show to Constantia, that he had nothing but the most fervent gratitude to offer her in return for her inappreciable services.

In their next interview, he accordingly declared to her, though not without considerable embarrassment, that as she might perhaps take an interest in the happiness of the man, whose life she had preserved, he trusted she would not refuse to give him any information it might be in her power to bestow, relative to the history of Julia Strickland, or to the causes

which had occasioned her father to be thus excommunicated by all mankind. He proceeded to state the indelible impression which Julia's numerous attractions had made upon his heart ; concluding with the avowal, that he should have implored her to unite her fate with his, had he not been deterred by the universal anathema that seemed to have been pronounced against her unfortunate parent.

During the delivery of his speech, Constan-tia had been sitting with her hands loosely held together in her lap, and her eyes fixed upon them, while a burning blush diffused itself over her face and neck. After its conclusion, she remained in the same attitude for a few seconds, until apparently roused from her reverie by the silence, she lifted up her head, shook aside the curls that had fallen over her large and lustrous eyes, and exclaimed, while her countenance was lighted up with an unusual animation.—“ I knew it—I foresaw it—I predicted it. Beauty, and innocence, and

talent, such as Julia's, were not to be encountered with impunity, especially when united with that vivacity which men love more than all the rest. And have you, unfortunate that you are, have you thrown away this pearl above all price, from a vague and cowardly apprehension of that vacillating scare-crow—the world?"

"If I could have felt confident that my friends"—said Jocelyn.

"Friends!" interrupted Constantia—"where are the friends to be put in competition with a wife, and, above all, such a wife as Julia? Envy, selfishness, inconstancy, are perpetually laying siege to every other attachment: and in a wife alone is there a security for unalterable friendship, because in her alone is there an absolute identity of interest. In her alone will it remain unalloyed by prosperity, and undiminished by reverses. Friends!—Mr. Strickland was for a long time the idol of his countrymen; he had youth, beauty, health, fortune,

power, popularity: all, all have vanished; the whole world has turned against him: of all his numerous blessings, one only has remained to him—the affection of his wife: an affection not only unsubdued, but exalted, refined, sublimised by the fire of persecution, through which her husband has been compelled to pass. Is it possible that you can have remained so long in the castle of Haelbeck, and have not appreciated the value of a virtuous woman's love?"

"I have reason to believe," said Jocelyn, "that Miss Strickland could not have been induced to quit that dreary abode."

"But you might have remained to share it with her," replied Constantia; "and by what she has endured for her father, you might have judged what she would dare and do for a husband."

"If I could ever have been sure that she would listen to my love—"

"Love!" interposed Constantia. "Beware, Sir, of desecration. Bestow not that sacred name

upon a pusillanimous and transient admiration, which crouches down and shrinks into nothing, if a finger or voice be lifted up against it. We are compounded of heavenly and of earthly elements, from whose mysterious union spring the two master-passions that ennoble our nature—religion and love. Devotion to one object above, devotedness to one object below; these are all-sufficient for the soul and for the heart: they lift us out of ourselves; they exalt us above this fleshly scene; they form for us a world within ourselves, shutting out the external world, and rendering us, for the time, independent of fate and fortune. They establish in our bosom an empire of our own, where the heart sits enthroned in the calm majesty of its own virtuous happiness. Oh, if you had truly loved Julia, the innocent Julia, who is thus sacrificing her youth to a sense of filial piety, with what an indignant scorn would you have spurned at society with all its conventional injustice! With what a proud fervour would

you have proclaimed yourself her champion, and deemed the desolate Haelbeck, so long as you could share it with her, a very paradise upon earth ! Reciprocal love must indeed sublimise the soul, almost to an antepast of the celestial beatitudes, when the heart can find it sweet to make sacrifices and encounter perils for the object of its secret attachment, even where it feels the passion to be unrequited, nay, even where it knows the affections of that object to be devoted to another."

Constantia had spoken with enthusiasm, for she had been giving utterance to her own deep feelings ; she had pressed her hand upon her heart, for she had been converting its pulsations into language ; she had been gazing intently upon Jocelyn, for she had been speaking of unrequited love ; and all this she had done unconsciously : but a sudden recollection of her own predicament, and a fear that he might suspect her of having made allusions to herself, covered her with a momentary confusion, which she en-

deavoured to conceal by an air of coldness and reserve, as she rose up and exclaimed, " But I forget that I am only an idle theorist in these matters; and you who are, or imagine yourself to be, acquainted with the passions, will doubtless smile at my visionary speculations. You have, perhaps, chosen the wiser path. If you seek favour from public opinion—if you think it will reward you for the happiness you have thrown away at Haelbeck—if you hope that it will embellish the life which you owe solely to a contempt of its censure—go, fall down before your deity, worship it, lay your head and your heart at its feet, and enjoy the glory of offering yourself up as a martyr to a blind and capricious idol. For me, it is time to make atonement for my rebellion against its authority; the life, for whose preservation I spurned it, is now secured; and I return to my allegiance. I shall see you no more, but I will not leave you without providing a regular physician to complete your cure."

“ If I may not owe that additional favour to the continued kindness of Constantia Beverning,” said Jocelyn, “ let me at least be exempted from other visitation, which will be as unacceptable as I feel it to be unnecessary.”

“ It is indispensable,” said Constantia ; “ you must be reported convalescent before the interdict can be removed from the house. May you never hereafter need the ministering, either of an unlicensed practitioner like myself, or of any more professional adviser. Fare you well, Sir ! I have taken one more parting liberty, unauthorized by usage, in leaving a purse upon the table, whose contents may, perhaps, be required, until the world, your master, remunerates you for your services. Nay, Sir, no denials, no protestations ; you have given proof of your disdain of obligation ; I have no doubt you will return it when you think fit, as punctually as you did my scarf.” As she made this remark, her face exhibited a slight expression of regret, almost of reproach ; but it passed away, and her counte-

nance quickly resumed its look of serious though benignant beauty.

“ Leave me not, I beseech you,” exclaimed Jocelyn, “ until you have enabled me, if you have the power, to decide between myself and Julia, by clearing up the mystery in which the fate of her father is involved.”

“ I have the power,” replied Constantia, with an expression of solemnity; “ but I thought you had seen enough of our sex at Haelbeck to believe, that in spite of the sneers of fools and ribalds, a secret may be best entrusted to the inviolable custody of a woman. When I know that a single syllable might occasion the horrible doom, that hangs over his head, to fall and crush him, these lips will remain as sacredly closed as if they had been sealed up by the finger of death. It is enough for you that I pronounce Julia to be innocent.—Innocent ! my heart upbraids me for insulting her with a praise so cold and negative. She is every thing that is pure, noble, and exemplary ! She is one whom a woman may in-

deed be proud to call her friend ; one whom that man will eternally regret, who has forfeited the opportunity of calling her his wife. Once more, Sir, farewell ! I ask you not to forget me ; the name of Constantia will be spontaneously, and I hope rapidly, obliterated from your memory : but I do implore you not to forget Him, by whose manifest interposition you have been saved ; and though your deference to the world may induce you to throw away your happiness upon earth, never, oh never, let it lead you to surrender your hopes of heaven !”

Jocelyn was beginning to pour forth the most fervent vows of gratitude, when she waved her hand ; and, pointing upwards to the sky, as if to indicate that his thanksgivings should be addressed to Heaven, she walked slowly and silently out of the apartment.

CHAPTER IV.

“ When we in our viciousness grow hard,
(O misery on’t !) the wise gods seal our eyes
In our own filth ; drop our clear judgments ; make us
Adore our errors ; laugh at us, while we strut
To our confusion.”

SHAKSPEARE.

FROM the deep interest she had taken in the fate of her friend at Haelbeck, and the reproaches she had cast upon Jocelyn, more, indeed, in sorrow than in anger, for not braving the world, and making Julia his wife, he began to think that he had been misled in imputing to Constantia any thing more tender than friendship in her feelings towards himself ; although, by this supposition, he was quite at a loss to account for her conduct. Even upon her friendship he had little or no claim ; upon a heroism

so devoted as that which she had evinced, he had none whatever. He had noticed no self-betrayal, no indications of jealousy in her deportment; yet there was a certain indecorum in her disregard of female observances, which could only be explained by the supposition of her acting under the influence of love. Why should she expose herself to censure, nay to death, for one, in whose fate her heart remained uninterested? He was utterly perplexed; he had no clue to her actions, because he compared her with other women, and could not comprehend the full sublimity of her character. Notwithstanding her declarations to the contrary, he even believed that she would repeat her visit on the following day: but he was mistaken: she came no more. In her stead appeared a physician, who had no sooner seen Jocelyn than he pronounced him to be perfectly cured, and congratulated him on his recovery from a disease so inexorable as hardly to have spared one in a thousand of those whom it had

attacked. Upon the report of this visitant, who was one of the examiners, the fearful red cross was effaced from the door, the padlock was removed, the watchman was withdrawn, and Jocelyn, with no other remains of his complaint than a trifling languor and debility, stepped, as it were, out of the grave, into the free, refreshing air of heaven, and bent his way towards the residence of the Lord Mayor, from whom it was necessary to have a certificate of health, to enable him to pass through any of the towns that surrounded London. This was easily obtained; nor did he now experience any difficulty in procuring an exclusive conveyance to Oxford; for the purse which Constantia had left with him was heavy with gold, and he moreover retained the money which he had borrowed from the deceased landlady. The latter he would have returned, could he have found her son, or any other claimant for the property; and the former he resolved to replace as soon as fortune enabled him, though he

would not run the risk of offending his generous preserver, by refusing to avail himself of it in his present need.

Turning his back upon the ill-fated city of London, along whose silent streets Death, the destroyer, was still walking in all the terror of his undiminished wrath, he plunged into the wholesome country, like a bird escaped from his cage, and inhaled the pure atmosphere, as if he had migrated into a happier world, and were enjoying a new existence. Delight was in every object, every sound, every odour; his senses seemed to be gifted with a second youth, that steeped them in pleasure; a fresh vitality was wafted from every field; mere existence became a species of ecstasy: his spirits were exhilarated; his body was refreshed; and instead of arriving at Oxford; as he had expected, in a state of increased debility, the change of air and succession of pleasant objects had so effectually counteracted the fatigues of travel, that he

felt himself infinitely better at the conclusion than at the commencement of his journey.

His friend Tracy, to whom he immediately betook himself, greeted him with the liveliest cordiality, declaring that nothing could be more opportune than his arrival, as every thing was now prepared for his complete restoration to favour. All his former opponents were, at last, propitiated. The King, with his usual pliability, was willing to grant whatever was asked him by any of his favourites, either male or female; the Duke of Buckingham, as Tracy had anticipated, declared that he had hated him long enough; and, as he sadly wanted a change of sensations, he was willing to receive him into his especial favour and protection. Lady Castlemaine had been the last to hold out, resisting all the solicitations of the Duke of Monmouth, who had been indefatigable in his behalf; nor would her wrath have been ultimately appeased, but for a little manœuvre of his friend Lord Rochester. That nobleman presented to her

one morning a most bitter and scurrilous lampoon upon her two mortal enemies, Lady Gerrard and the Duchess of Richmond, with which she was so immeasurably delighted, that she desired him to name his own reward, binding herself by an oath to grant it. According to the scandalous chronicle of the courtiers, who had for some time observed a growing *penchant* between the parties, she expected that he would gladly seize this opportunity for indulging his love of gallantry, and of affording her the excuse of her vow to permit it: but his Lordship, whose capricious humour sometimes found more pleasure in vexing and disappointing others, than even in advancing his own intrigues, stipulated for her forgiveness of Jocelyn, and her consent to his recall. These points she was bound in honour to concede; but she had never spoken since to Lord Rochester, and Jocelyn was warned that this extorted reconciliation, with a woman of her haughty character, was likely to prove hollow and insincere.

Not many hours had elapsed after his arrival at Oxford, when he was presented to the Queen, who received him with extraordinary condescension and kindness, inquiring into all the circumstances of his exile, as well as his recovery from the plague, and expressing her regret that he should have been exposed to so much peril and suffering upon her account. She cautioned him, however, against any future indulgence in such intemperate language as that which had led to his disgrace, particularly desiring him never to let his zeal for the Queen, lead him to forget his duty to the King. Although his situation of vice-chamberlain had been bestowed upon another, she declared that she held herself accountable to him for the salary up to the period of his return, which she should desire her treasurer to pay over to him : and added, that if he considered the post of her private secretary a desirable substitution for his former office, he might kiss her hand upon receiving the appointment. With a smile of affability, she held it out

to him for that purpose; and Jocelyn, falling upon one knee, acknowledged in suitable terms, his grateful sense of the honour conferred upon him. Her Majesty informed him that his duties would be very trifling, as she was so mere a cypher in the state, as to have little or no correspondence; adding, that she should hardly have filled up the appointment, unless for the pleasure of obliging one who had suffered from his imprudence in her behalf; and finally declared that if he desired to absent himself from the court, until his health was more fully re-established, he was at perfect liberty to do so.

Of this permission he could have hardly found leisure to avail himself, even had he desired it, for it was no sooner buzzed abroad, that he had returned to court, had been nominated to a better appointment than the one he had lost, and was likely to be in greater favour than ever, than his apartment was thronged with the minions and parasites, who came to congratulate him on his good fortune, and express their unfeigned regard

for a man, whose name, but the week before, they would not have mentioned without some disparaging adjunct. Among others who thus presented themselves, was Mark Walton, his second in the duel with Bagot, who was so delighted at learning the Queen's liberality in paying him his arrears, that he condescended to borrow nearly the whole of the money, to advance some project which he had at that moment in hand, and in which, if successful, he declared that his fortune would be made for life. "You are happy," he exclaimed, "in serving the Queen instead of the King, for I have not yet received one farthing of my salary since the Restoration, and this is almost universally the case; though for any of the King's mistresses, or other pleasurable purpose, there is a lavish expenditure of money, even to waste and wantonness.* However," continued the cautious young

* "The King was vexed the other day for having no paper laid for him at the council-table, as was usual, and Sir Richard Browne did tell his Majesty he would call the

courtier, “ we must not rashly blame his Majesty, in whose defence much may be said. The tragical death of his father, his wandering and necessitous life in early youth, the perils to which he was exposed, and the treason and ingratitude that he so often encountered, have probably combined to disgust him with public business, and to render him distrustful of mankind, and to persuade him that the *summum bonum* consists in ease, indolence, and sensual indulgence, an error from which his own good sense would have long ago redeemed him, had he not been confirmed in it by satellites and flatterers.”

“ I differ with you, *toto cælo*,” cried Jocelyn, person whose work it was to provide it : who being come did tell his Majesty that he was but a poor man, and was out 4 or 500*l.* for it, which was as much as he was worth ; and that he cannot provide it any longer without money, having not received a penny since the King’s coming-in. And many such mementos, the King do now-a-day meet withal, enough to make an ingenuous man mad.”—Memoirs of Pepys, vol. ii. p. 44. In the very next page the author notices a grant for 4000*l.* worth of plate to be made for Lady Byron, who had been the King’s seventeenth mistress when abroad.

“his father’s fate should have warned him against the causes that produced it; his wandering life, by giving him experience, might have taught him wisdom; * the good sense, that is not

* That such was the opinion of his contemporaries, will be seen by the following extracts from the tract in the British Museum, of which mention has already been made; while they prove, at the same time, the base sycophancy and adulation with which the restored Monarch was assailed. “And, indeed, those great opportunities which he hath had by his being so long abroad, of diving into the great councils of foreign princes and states, must necessarily make him a person of a very perspicuous understanding, and endowed him with all those qualities which may deservedly attain the name of great, and render him as well an able statist as a king; he having, during his expulsion, travelled through and lived in the countries of three the most potent princes in Christendom: viz. the emperor of Germany, and the kings of Spain and France, &c. So that both nature and industry have seemed to use their utmost endeavours to make him a perfect prince, his very afflictions turning in this to his benefit, and making him in knowledge and sufferings, (the refiner of knowledge), unparalleled. Neither is his piety less than his justice, they are both in the superlative degree; he hates wickedness, not because the world should see him glory, (that would make him an hypocrite,) but because God abhors it. To conclude—he is the pattern of patience and piety, the most righteous and justest of

proof against the grossest flattery, cannot be rated very high ; and surely Charles the Second is the last man that can be allowed to talk of treachery and ingratitude, when we recollect, that for many years, the support of his cause deluged the country in blood ; that even in his most desperate circumstances, there were never wanting gallant noblemen and Cavaliers to sacrifice their lives and fortunes in his behalf ; and that, finally, the whole nation threw itself into his arms without reserve or stipulation. But I forget myself, I have already been cautioned against falling into this error ! It becomes not me——” Here he was interrupted by the appearance of the Duke of Monmouth, who embraced him with the utmost cordiality, and

kings, the most knowing and experienced of princes, the holiest and the best of men : the severest punisher of vice, the strictest rewarder of virtue : the constantest preserver of religion, and the truest lover of his subjects.” Here the author breaks off from a fear, as he informs us, that he should fall short of the King’s virtues, though he still takes occasion to add that he is remarkable for his abhorrence of debauchery !

expressed his hopes that their former friendship would be not only renewed, but cemented by the temporary interruption it had sustained ; “ I should rather say separation,” added the duke, “ for my good wishes and good offices suffered no diminution in your absence. I have a thousand things to tell you, but I will defer the relation till you sup with me to-morrow night. It is the fast day, and as there will be no public entertainment I shall have company in my own rooms. Fail not, for I have tidings for you which I care not to utter in the presence of others.” He cast a look at Walton as he spoke, which presently sent that accommodating personage out of the room, and then continued : “ Beware of that fellow ; he is ever seeking to advance himself, by entrapping others, and though he has hitherto gained nothing but a pretty general contempt, there are circumstances in the present situation of the court, which may render him dangerous. And here comes another, who, without any of the sordid motives of

Bagot, is equally to be dreaded from his mere love of mischief; so I will leave you to encounter him alone, and adjourn our colloquy until we can season it with sack. I have some, flavoured with apricot, which you will pronounce-inimitable."

As he left the room, Lord Rochester entered it, singing a part of Matthew Lock's glee; "Never trouble thyself about times or their turnings," after which he ejaculated, "Ha! my Faunus, my sylvan, my man of the woods, my quondam brother in disgrace and exile, let us embrace, for bold as may be the word, I flatter myself we are as arrant a couple of scapegraces as any in the court. You have been in banishment, I have been in the tower; and here we are both in high favour, until another freak of fortune orders us to the right-about. Brother culprit, you are welcome to the learned and religious (and therefore to King Charles the most appropriate) city of Oxford."

"A favour, for which I understand that I am

mainly indebted to your Lordship," said Jocelyn, "and I can assure you that I entertain a most grateful sense—"

"Nay, nay, prythee be not so common-place," cried Rochester; "have any other sense that you like—no sense, if you will; but prythee, while you live, ever eschew a grateful sense.—Foh! it savours of the Puritan. Indebted to me, my Faunus? no such thing. Not to serve you, but to plague Lady Castlemaine, did I condition for your pardon; and if I have conferred a benefit, depend upon it I shall exact more than its value in return. I told you so in the outset of our acquaintance. *Do ut des*, is my motto. Where godliness can be made a great gain, and charity be put out to usurious interest, who so pious, who so charitable, as the profligate Jack Wilmot?"

"It is peculiar to your Lordship to be more ashamed of your good actions, than others are of their bad ones," said Jocelyn.

"Because I had rather wear a worthless cam-

let that is the fashion, than a gold-laced velvet that is out of vogue. When virtue becomes the mode at court, you shall see my Lord Rochester the very pink of fashion; but Gramercy! there is little chance of so ominous a transformation while Charles the Second is King; his pleasures his ministers; idleness his occupation; the dinner-table his council-board; and his mistresses his masters. A merry world and a mad, is the motto of to-day; to which, if you add, a fig for yesterday! and hang to-morrow! you have a clue to all the mysteries of the court, past, present, and to come. What shall be our next freak, my man of the woods? As you helped me to run away *with* Mistress Mallett, wilt help me now that she is my wife, to run away *from* her? 'Twere the better service of the two. O that inimitable drunken mountebank! how many times have I attempted to enact the character, and how unworthy was the copy of the great original! Hyperion to a Satyr. Here come more friends; they have heard of your

appointment: O the summer rogues ! They come like the flies with the sunshine, to disappear when you are under a cloud. Let me avoid their buzzing. I know their value, for I have written a poem upon Nothing."

His Lordship fled, leaving Jocelyn to a levee of subordinates and minor courtiers, whose interested professions and congratulations he received with apparent complacency, though he fully appreciated the worth of such lip-deep friendship. Among others came Tracy, with a message from the Queen, inviting him, if he felt sufficiently recovered, to attend a splendid entertainment which was to be given that evening in Christ-church Hall, and at which he might be presented to the King upon his appointment. Little as he felt disposed to encounter such festivities after the lamentable scenes of suffering and sickness he had so lately visited, he considered her Majesty's invitation as a command which he was bound to obey, and accordingly dressed himself in the gayest attire that he

could procure at so short a notice, girt his diamond-hilted sword to his side, and betook himself to the venerable Hall of Christ-church, which had never before resounded with such notes of revelry and music, nor encircled so joyous and magnificent an assemblage.

The whole enclosure was nearly filled with company when he entered, the gothic and gloomy architecture of the building, and the recollection of the purposes to which it was usually applied, contrasting strongly with the blaze of lights, the sparkling beauties, the splendid court, the smiling faces, the tables covered with cards and dice, and the waving plumes of the dancers, as they moved to the melody of wind-instruments, whose cadences were mingled with the buzz of conversation, or the louder echoes of merriment and laughter. Misgivings as to the kind of reception, he was likely to experience from the King, rendered him anxious for the completion of that ceremony, and he was always so impatient of sus-

pense, that he was not sorry when Lord Rochester took him by the hand, and leading him directly up to the Monarch, exclaimed as he presented him; "Here is another of your Majesty's naughty boys, who is a petitioner for forgiveness, and is ready to perform whatever penance may be enjoined him, only barring birch and ferula, imprisonment or starvation."

"He cannot be condemned to wear the fool's cap without robbing your Lordship," said the Monarch, smiling, "and we therefore sentence him to learn fifty lines by heart, and yourself to write them."

"Your Majesty was ever merciful," cried Rochester—"an easy penalty, indeed!"

"Not so simple as you may imagine"—said the King—"for you are prohibited from being either indecent or profane in your verses."

"I am absolved by the very conditions," replied Rochester, "for no one is bound to perform impossibilities."

Jocelyn was expressing his regret that he

should ever have fallen under his Majesty's displeasure, when the good-humoured Monarch interrupted him with an exclamation of—"Tilly vally, man ! name it not. If every man who abuses me behind my back were to run away from Court, I might hold my grand levee in a sentry-box ; and besides, I have forgotten so many services, that I am bound in justice to overlook a few offences. Your father, stout Sir John, was ever a trusty Knight and true ; and I remember too well our supper at Bruges, to punish the quondam Queen of the Gate-house for forgetting her own-station, and arraigning royalty."—He held out his hand which Jocelyn kissed, and as others were pressing forward to be presented, he retired from the throng, not less delighted with his reception, than surprised that his Majesty should recollect their supper-party at Bruges, and the particulars of his escape from prison.

Finding himself unpleasantly affected by the heat, he retired to the deep embrasure of one of the windows, from which retreat he saw

Lady Castlemaine flaunt athwart the hall, blazing like a meteor, her whole dress being illuminated with jewels: she was succeeded shortly afterwards by Mistress Wells, Mistress Stewart, and others of the King's real or reputed mistresses, all decorated with a magnificence that eclipsed other competitors, although it did not equal that of Lady Castlemaine. Lord Mordaunt and an elderly lady were seated at a little distance, noticing this procession of emblazoned wantons, and coupling it with the King's lavish expenditure upon Nell Gwynn and Moll Davies, for whom he had lately been fitting up houses in Pall Mall and Suffolk Street, when the Lady exclaimed—"Ought not such shameless and wasteful hussies to be impeached?"

"No, indeed," replied Lord Mordaunt, "we should rather erect statues to the patriotic courtezans who make their lover dependant upon Parliament for his subsistence. The people would soon be slaves, if the King were not always a beggar." Conceiving from the tenor of

their conversation that it was not meant to be overheard, Jocelyn left his retreat, and again mixed himself with the company, anxious to get near the fantastical Duchess of Newcastle, whom he saw at a little distance, attracting all eyes by the preposterous singularity of her dress and discourse. This lady, who had written thirteen volumes upon speculative subjects, was inquiring of the Bishop of Chester, who had attempted to show the possibility of a voyage to the moon, where she was to stop and bait, supposing she were to undertake the journey. "Madam," said the Bishop, "of all people in the world I should least have expected that question from you, who have built so many castles in the air, that you might sleep every night in one of them." Notwithstanding this rebuff, her Grace was preparing to renew her attack, and Jocelyn was anticipating some amusement from the keen encounter of two such original wranglers, when, as his evil destiny ordained, he was pounced upon and seized, beyond all possibility of escape,

by his old assailant Lady Babington, who thus began to pour out upon him the inexhaustible poverty of her ideas, nodding at intervals, and bestowing a word or two upon her passing friends.

“Vastly well, thank ye; how do *you* do? La! how pale you look, and thin! So, you’ve got your fine sword still.—Isn’t it a dreadful thing, this plague? They say it has killed a hundred thousand people already. I declare it makes one quite low.—He, he! did you hear of the poor tipsy piper, that laid himself down upon a bulk to sleep—How do, Lady Sanderson?—that ’s the mother of the maids—and so being taken for a corpse, was tossed into the dead-cart, where he presently came to his senses, and tuning up a jig upon his pipes, frightened the driver and the burier out of their wits. Monstrous droll, wasn’t it?—There goes Oliver’s Fiddler, as they call him—Sir Robert L’Estrange. Only think of poor Tom Chiffinch’s death, the King’s closet-keeper! playing tables last night as well

as ever, and dead this morning before seven o'clock.—How do, Clifford?—Ah, my Lord Ashley! I heard of your quarrel t' other day with Lord Ossory.—La! my dear Mrs. Price, a thousand thanks for the Service Marmalade, and the Rob of Cornelian Cherry: quite delicious! Where did you get your still-room maid?—What a beautiful Demi-Sultane, and all trimmed with Pointe d'Espagne! no, the Engageans* are only Colbertine or Campanie, I believe. Allow me, my dear; there's one of your star-patches coming off your cheek, and there's your Palisade† mixed with the Berger.‡ What bungler dressed your hair? Where do you get your Spanish paper? what a beautiful colour it gives you! Good bye. She's one of the maids of honour, and the Duke's favourite. Did you hear of her mad pranks t' other day with Mrs. Jennings, dressing themselves up as orange-girls, and how Tom Killigrew took

* Deep double ruffles, down to the wrists.

† Part of the head-dress.

‡ A plain small lock, turned up with a puff.

liberties with them?—very improper!—Ah, my dear Mrs. Jennings, how do? just talking of you. How well you 're looking. I saw you yesterday, bobbing along in your gay sedan. La! what a pretty gold knob for holding your pomander ball; and fastened, I see, with a French pennache. Can you spare me any more of your nice Pastillos di Bocca? They are much better than Dr. Goddard's Drops.—So the Doctor ran away from London when the plague began.—What a rich Pointe de Venise round your Échelles!*—How do, Duke of Buckingham? I heard of your scuffle, and pulling off the Marquis of Dorchester's perriwig t'other day, when you were all sitting in council. Mighty fine doings! By the bye, who will purchase perriwigs hereafter? they will all be made of hair from the heads of the nasty people that die in the plague. Isn't it dangerous?—How do, Arlington?—I have now seen the whole of the Cabal, hav'n't I? Clifford, Ash-

* A stomacher laced with ribbon.

ley, Buckingham, Arlington—no, there's an L wanting, and here he comes, I do declare. How do, Lauderdale, how do, Lauderdale?—there—that makes up the C, A, B, A, L."

Jocelyn availed himself of a momentary cessation to attempt an escape, by declaring that he saw his friend the Duke of Monmouth beckoning to him, but she only held him faster when she detected his design, and having recovered her breath immediately recommenced.—"Oh he only wants to show you his new George; very handsome, a cardonyx set round with rose-diamonds; a George engraved on one side of the onyx, and the other enameled. La! I do declare there's the King openly kissing Mrs. Stewart in the window, and the Queen in the room. 'Pon my life it's too bad!—What a horrid noise the music makes; I can't hear a word that's said. You haven't seen my new rooms, one hung with Moreclack tapistry,¹ and the other with pintado: all Indian figures you know, vastly pretty; and an arras carpet of gold, silver, and rich flowers,

with the arms in the centre. There goes that simple Damætes,* Lord Chandois; you'll see him presently accompanying the dancers by humming a psalm to himself. I remember when I last saw you, I had just lost my poor sister Fanny. Ah! I shall never forget her. Heigho!—He, he! do for Heaven's sake look at the old Countess Culpepper, she has just laughed out one of her plumpers,† and see how she turns away her hollow cheek from every one that speaks to her. Monstrous droll, isn't it? How do Mrs. Middleton? How is the darling little spaniel with the crimson garland and silver bells? I saw you yesterday in your yellow bird's-eye hood, your loo-mask, and your scarf with the broad Flanders lace.—La! what mighty pretty calf-buckles!—So we are to have a fast-day for the plague to-morrow.—And what charming pearl-pears in your ears! Is this Calembue‡

* A weak character in Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*.

† The light balls used to fill up the cavities of the cheeks.

‡ A scented wood from the Indies.

fan perfumed with jessamine or narcissus?—She is one of the King's beauties.—How do, Sir Evremond? How do, De Grammont? Always together, Pyramus and Thisbe. I have seen the fine coach you presented to the King. La, Mr. Compton, what a hurry you are in. Have you heard that the Duchess of York is in love with Harry Sidney, her master of the horse? Did you ever hear the echo at Somerset House? Have you read the new translation of Ovid's *Matamorphoses*? Which do you like best as a preacher, old Dr. Fell—how do, Killigrew? how do, Sir George Etherege?—or young Dr. Stillingfleet? Do you like these bright yellow locks for dark people? No more do I. That's Monsieur Comminges, the French Ambassador. How do, Sir Charles Sedley? Here comes Sir Harry Herbert, the Master of the Revels, accompanied by Mr. Waller. Only think of their making him so tipsy, notwithstanding his being called the water-drinking poet; and his getting such a dreadful fall down the river-stairs at

Somerset House. You see he is quite lame still."

Most fortunately for Jocelyn, who was upon the point of summoning the Duke of Monmouth to the rescue, the master of the revels and the poet came up for the express purpose of effecting his deliverance ; not indeed out of any kindness to him, with whom they were personally unacquainted, but in virtue of a commission, which specially charged them to transfer the cherry-clapper, as Lady Babington was sometimes disrespectfully termed, to another victim. Lady Castlemaine, vexed at the King's continued and undisguised dalliance with Mrs. (or rather, as we should now designate a maid of honour, with *Miss*) Stewart, a dalliance which was even exceeding the customary licence of that latitudinarian court, had despatched these emissaries to inform the sempiternal chatterer, that Miss Stewart was particularly anxious to see her, as she had procured for her some real Hungary water, with the Queen's head labelled upon the bottles.

She well knew that her Ladyship, who was no respecter of persons or places, would soon invade the sanctity of the bower, which all the rest of the Court had so kindly abandoned to the amorous Monarch and the maid of honour ; and she was equally confident that the King would fly in dismay at the very first appearance of the approaching calamity. Every thing answered to her wishes ; Lady Babington had no sooner received the message than she exclaimed, “ O, the dear creature ! then I will beg her to accept in return my pretty little dear patch-box of mazarine fillagree, and a glue-pot to match. Good bye, Mr. Compton, I must really——that’s the Cardinal Howard, of Norfolk, the Queen’s almoner ; and here comes the Duchess of Newcastle, with her hair about her ears, and fifty black patches on her face. La ! what a pretty scarlet sword-knot ! —good bye, good bye ! I really cannot listen to you a moment longer.—La ! there is old Sir Henry de Vie, with his ragged beard. I dare say he is going to play cribbage with Lord

Chandois. I'm glad he has got rid of his shabby camelott suit. Isn't he smart?—black velvet, gold buttons looped with lace, trimmed all over with scarlet ribbons, and a gold-lace shoulder-belt! Well, I declare!"—With these words, she hurried away, darted unceremoniously into the royal recess, out of which the King as instantaneously sprung, as if he had seen a viper; and a loud laugh from Lady Castlemaine and her coterie, of whom the Queen formed one, attested the success of their manœuvre, the discomfiture of Miss Stewart, and the triumph of her rivals.

In nothing did Jocelyn mark a more decided change, since his absence from the Court, than in the demeanour of the Queen, who was now chatting familiarly with her husband's mistress, with the identical woman whose presentation she had resented with such a passion of wrath. Her Majesty had indeed struggled for a length of time to uphold her own dignity, and preserve some little appearance of decorum in the

Court; but finding the King, however pliable in other matters, inflexible in his gallantry and licentious pleasures, and becoming sensible that opposition would only lead to an open breach between them, without its affording a chance of reforming him, she gradually yielded to circumstances, until she brought herself not only to wink at his intrigues, but even to associate with his courtesans. Nay, so completely had she accommodated herself to the manners of the Court, that she relaxed in many instances from the rigour of her religious observances, and at the period of Jocelyn's return had already begun to play cards upon the Sabbath.

While he was indulging these reflections, he observed that the dancing had every where ceased, and that the band were removed to a small temporary orchestra, at one extremity of the room, beyond which he now noticed for the first time a large green curtain, and upon inquiring of Sir Henry Herbert the meaning of these demonstrations, he learned that a little

masque was about to be performed for the amusement of the Court. It had been prepared by Sir Roger L'Estrange, and, being intended to be complimentary to their Majesties, contained much of that gross and fulsome adulation which it would be an insult to offer to any but crowned heads. The characters were all allegorical; and the performers such as could be hastily called from a strolling company, consisting of some half-dozen men, dressed up in female attire to represent the virtues, and other abstract personages. Matthew Lock had adapted music to the different scenes, and Capt. Cook had altered one of his anthems for the finale. In short, nothing was omitted, which the hurried nature of the preparation would allow, to give success and *eclat* to this little entertainment, from which the two composers, and the ingenious author of the blank verse, anticipated no small share of admiration and applause.

But, alas! what are the hopes of mortals?

Rochester, who had been admitted, as a great favour, and under a promise of secrecy, to one of the rehearsals, observing the clownish nature of the rustic performers, conceived the project of one of those mischievous pranks in which he delighted ; and, communicating his plan to Sir Thomas Killigrew, the two conspirators proceeded immediately to put it into execution. While the musical composers were out of the way, and Sir Roger L'Estrange engaged with the company in the hall, they introduced a little collation behind the curtain, pretending that it had been sent by the King for the refreshment of the performers. Into the burned sack and other potent compounds they infused an intoxicating mixture. The actors, unaccustomed to such insidious draughts, and willing to do all honour to his Majesty, as well as to their distinguished companions, drank the King's health, and pledged their entertainers, and hobanobb'd with one another until they were sufficiently besotted to be quite ripe for a quarrel. With

such vulgar natures, a scuffle and a brawl are generally the immediate consequence of ebriety. Rochester and his friend pretended to quarrel and fight; the actors espoused different sides, and a general engagement ensued, in the midst of which the original combatants slipped away. One of them rang the bell which was to procure silence and draw the attention of the company; the other pulled up the curtain; and the eyes of their Majesties and the assembled Court were directed to a scene of scuffling, uproar, and wild confusion, such as has been seldom exhibited to royal or even to plebeian observation.

Had the whole been intended as a burlesque, and the performers received instructions to travestie their various parts, they could not have more successfully reversed their respective attributes and characters. Peace, who appeared to be the foremost and most desperate of the combatants, after laying about him, right and left, with a huge olive branch, which had already felled two of the party, had pursued

Victory into a corner, and, having utterly defeated him, was endeavouring to strangle him with his own wreath. Religion was cursing and swearing like a trooper at Mercy, who, having got him down to the ground, was pummelling him with a most truculent and blood-thirsty rage. Hope was seen utterly reduced to despair by Justice, who was belabouring him in a blind fury with his wooden sword. Charity, holding a bottle of sack to his mouth, was refusing a single drop of it to Faith, in spite of the most earnest supplications. Temperance, with a black eye, was lying sprawling in one corner of the stage, in a most pitiable plight of drunkenness; and Fortitude was sitting in another, crying and snivelling because Peace had given him a bloody nose.

At first, the spectators were lost in an utter amazement, staring in bewilderment at the scene before them, and waiting impatiently till the hidden meaning should develope itself. Accustomed to masqueradings, pranks, gambols,

and every species of farcical buffoonery, they took it for granted that the representation was part of the regular entertainment, allegorical, perhaps, of chaos and war, out of which were ultimately to spring peace and order, and all the golden virtues of Saturn and Astræa. Of such a desirable consummation, however, there was not the least appearance. War raged with redoubled fury; the actions, language, and attitudes of the belligerents sufficiently testified that they were not only angry in earnest, but most indisputably tipsy. The trick that had been played them was quickly buzzed about: they who were not in the secret began to guess at the truth; the real state of the case seemed to flash upon the whole assembly at once; and a simultaneous, universal roar of boisterous laughter made the vaulted and venerable roof of Christchurch-hall re-echo to its peal.

To the polished Court of Charles the Second, as it has been sometimes, though most erroneous-

ly, denominated, there was nothing revolting in the grossness and irregularity of the scene before them. By no means squeamish themselves, and still less fastidious about others, they found food for an egregious and ungovernable mirth in the profane oaths, ribald language, disfigured features, drunken looks, and indecorous gestures of the actors, all of whom seemed to forget that they represented females, and were attired in petticoats. Their first fury of intoxication and anger was now subsiding; and as they gradually became sensible, in their returning soberness, that they had been guilty of a most enormous disrespect to Majesty, they gazed at the august company, whom they had thus outraged, with vacant, sheepish, and lack-a-daisical looks, that seemed equally compounded of drunkenness and dismay; but which only aggravated into a shriek the laughter of the spectators.

Rochester, who never wished a jest to drop, and never felt the least compunction towards

its victims, heightened their terrors to the utmost by again mingling among the actors; informing them that the King was in wrathful dudgeon, and playing upon their still-bewildered faculties until he persuaded them that they had been guilty of petty treason and Leze-Majesté. Finding them in a fit mood for his purpose, he led them all up in penitent plight to the royal chair, and asked the King whether it was his Majesty's pleasure to pronounce sentence of death upon the culprits?

“My Lord of Rochester, well knowing your fitness for the office, we constitute you our Judge and Representative,” replied Charles, who enjoyed the scene, though he did not wish to be at the trouble of supporting a character in it.

“Aha!” exclaimed Rochester pompously, at the same time puffing out his cheeks, pulling out the curls of his perriwig in order to look as judicial as possible, and sinking slowly and magisterially into a chair; while Killi-

grew seated himself upon the ground before him, and, taking a pencil and paper from his pocket, assumed the sober look of a magistrate's clerk.

Speaking in a loud, solemn, and dictatorial tone, the mock Judge then exclaimed: "Come into Court, ye rascally Virtues, foul-mouthed Purities, and worthless Excellencies! how will ye be tried, humanly or allegorically, in your persons or personifications; as ye ought to be, and are not; or as ye are, and ought not to be?"

The puzzled and penitent looks of the delinquents declared, without speaking, that the question was beyond their comprehension; and a dead silence ensued, until Temperance, hic-coughing, tottering on his knees, and fixing his drunken eyes upon Rochester with a stolid stare, mumbled out: "I'll take my oath, my lord, I'm at this moment as sober as a Judge."

"As your present Judge you may be," cried Charles. "'Ods fish! my friend, subpœna the King, and he shall swear to it."

“It’s the first time I ever knew your Majesty to be a friend to Temperance,” said Rochester: then turning to the delinquents, he continued—
“Pay attention, ye emblematical moralities and real raggamuffins, and listen to your sentence. You, Peace! were the first to break yourself, and shall therefore be bound over under a heavy penalty to keep yourself. You, Mercy! showed none of yourself, and shall therefore receive none of yourself. Justice! you may depend upon having yourself. You, Hope! on the contrary, must give yourself up; and you, Fortitude! may prepare to act with yourself. And now, ye self-antitheses, hearken to your verdict, as the Court shall record it. As his Majesty would be sorry to put the cardinal Virtues in the stocks, or order Faith, Hope, and Charity to be whipped at the cart’s tail, in order to avoid such grievous scandal, and save ye all the shame of such an exposure, he is most graciously pleased to order that ye be jointly and severally hanged by the neck till ye be dead.”

“O Lord ! Lord !” cried Fortitude, who was less recovered from his intoxication than the others, and wore a face of most tipsy terror, “what will become of us ? what will become of us ? Do, my Lord Judge, show us mercy !”

“There he is,” said Rochester, pointing to the man who had enacted that character,—“and a more remorseless-looking rogue I never saw. There is no chance for you in his face ; it is suffused all over with the gallows.—You must swing, Sir ; you must swing !”

“’Ods fish !” cried Charles, interposing,—“you will frighten the fellow out of his wits. The joke has gone far enough. Begone, ye varlets ! the King pardons ye all, on condition that ye get not drunk again to-morrow, for it is the fast-day. Rochester, let them be well paid, for we prefer their travestie to the intended original. The rogues would doubtless rather receive money than applause ; and thus shall we be all satisfied.”

In expressing this opinion, his Majesty did not reckon upon the irritability and touchiness of Matthew Lock, the composer, who no sooner found that his pains were likely to be thrown away, than he bustled through the throng chafing with ire, and, approaching the royal seat, pettishly, exclaimed:—"With all due submission to your Majesty, I cannot submit to it. I cannot sit up all night to compose a curtaintune, and a quintetto, besides recitatives, to have them all lost in this way for a joke!"

"Tilly vally! man, they shall not be lost!" cried the Monarch; "we will have them another time, for it were no joke to lose a single note of your composing; and to-night you shall play to us your music of the witches in Macbeth, than which I know nothing finer."

"Your Majesty is certainly the best judge in England," said the appeased musician, bowing complacently as he spoke.

"And a good composer too," added Ro-

chester, "for he has soothed your wrath in a minute."

"Now then!" cried the King, clapping his hands together to draw attention, "let every gallant single out his beauty, for the supper awaits us. Music! play up the new French galliard, *la belle Fontanges*.—There is good Rhenish and rare Canary in the cellars of Christchurch, and we will all pledge our fair partners of the dance in each liquor, until beauty and the glass shall give a zest to one another. 'Ods fish! the sight of those tipsy masquers has made me thirsty: so hey for the Banquet-room! without further parley."

At these words he walked out of the hall, followed by the courtiers, each leading his partner or his mistress, and all smiling, talking, and laughing, till their glittering dresses and waving plumes gradually disappeared, the buzz of their voices was no longer heard, and only one person remained in the silent and deserted hall:

that one was Jocelyn. Disgusted by what he had already seen, he was too sad and sick at heart to endure any farther festivities. Far from participating in the past entertainment, his thoughts had reverted to the appalling scenes from which he had so recently escaped; and when he contrasted the ghastliness and desolation of the depopulated, plague-stricken city, its yawning sepulchres, and the tolling bells of its dead-carts, with the wild festivities and unbridled foolery, the mirth, music, and madness that had just been exhibiting before his eyes, he almost expected that a voice should come up out of the great pit to rebuke these revellers for thus defying the King of Terrors, and flaunting in the very face of an offended God. Impressed with these feelings he withdrew from the Hall to his own apartments, wrote an excuse to the Duke of Monmouth, with whom he had engaged to sup on the following night, and determined to remain at home and devote the whole of the

fast-day to that serious frame of mind, and those devotional exercises, which were appropriate to the solemn occasion.*

* Pepys assigns a reason for accelerating the Fast-day, which, if not founded on fact, at least shows the opinion that was then entertained of the Court.—“1666, November 20. To church, it being thanksgiving-day for the cessation of the plague. But, Lord! how the town do say that it is hastened before the plague is quite over, there being some people still ill of it, but only to get ground of plays to be publicly acted, which the bishops would not suffer till the plague was over.” *Diary*, Vol. i. p. 483.

Evelyn says the Fast was ordered to “humble us on the most dismal judgments that could be inflicted, but which, indeed, we highly deserved, for our prodigious ingratitude, burning lusts, dissolute Court, profane and abominable lives, under such dispensations of God’s continued favour in restoring Church, Prince, and People, from our late intestine calamities, of which we were altogether unmindful, even to astonishment.” *Memoirs*, Vol. i. p. 398.

Although De Foe’s *Journal of the Plague* was not written till fifty-seven years after the event which it records, and is a mere fiction as to the assumed character and station of the author, yet its details appear to have been accurately compiled from authentic materials, a circumstance which may give some value to the following statements.—“I should observe that the

Court removed early, viz. in the month of June, and went to Oxford, where it pleased God to preserve them ; and the distemper did not, as I heard of, so much as touch them ; for which I cannot say that I ever saw they showed any great token of thankfulness, and hardly any thing of reformation, though they did not want being told that their crying vices might, without breach of charity, be said to have gone far in bringing that terrible calamity upon the whole nation." p. 33.

" But really the Court concerned themselves so little, and that little they did was of so small import, that I did not see it of much moment to mention any part of it here, except that of appointing a monthly Fast in the city, and the sending the royal charity to the relief of the poor, both which I have mentioned before." p. 477. This was a donation of 1000*l.* a-week to be distributed in four different quarters ; but the author adds that he only speaks of it as a report.

CHAPTER V.

“ While he, young, wanton, and effeminate boy,
Takes on the point of honour to support
So dissolute a crew.”

SHAKSPEARE.

AFTER having remained for some weeks longer at Oxford, beguiling the time with such festivities and amusements as could be obtained in that grave and reverend city, the joyful news was at length circulated that the Court was about to return to London; the plague having gradually exhausted its fury, until all danger of contagion had disappeared. Congratulations flew from mouth to mouth, not so much upon the cessation of the pestilence, as upon the prospect of again plunging into the delights and dissipation of the metropolis.

Never was a more cheerful alacrity displayed in packing up and preparing for flight. The seat of the Muses had little attractions for a set of gay triflers, whose literature was limited to licentious poems and obscene plays, and who consequently thought colleges and gowns a sorry substitute for theatres and petticoats. Oxford had long been voted *triste à toute ou trance*, a phrase which was in every mouth, when, in the rage for French fashions, the *langage de beau* was affected by all pretenders to modishness and gentility; and the whole assemblage that accompanied or followed the King and Queen, turned their backs upon the city to which they had been indebted for their preservation from infection, not only without gratitude or regret, but with all the vituperation and ridicule that their anger or their wit could suggest.

By the greater part of them, London was re-entered with little or no emotion, for they found it nearly as they had left it.

To Jocelyn, however, it offered a contrast with its last appearance, which he could have hardly believed credible in so short a space of time. The numerous fugitives, encouraged by the announced return of the Court, had all hastened back to their abodes ; the shops were re-opened ; the streets were again thronged with people ; equipages and carriages of every description were rattling along the pavement ; quick-lime had been spread over the churchyards, and the other huge excavations in which the dead had been deposited ; and it appeared as if some moral caustic had been also spread over the memories of the survivors ; for after the expression of a transient wonder, and the inquiries of Who has perished ? Who has been saved ? the business and pleasures of the capital recommenced, and the great social wheel, as it again rolled forward, seemed to obliterate in its progress every trace of the past, every print that had been left by the foot of Death !

Jocelyn made it his first care, after his arrival

in London, to call upon Alderman Staunton, for the purpose of renewing a more formal expression of his gratitude to Constantia, as well as of repaying the money she had lent him ; for his proud spirit was impatient of pecuniary obligation, and the Queen's continued bounty now enabled him to cancel his debt without inconvenience. That, which he still owed to Constantia for his recovery, was of course beyond all power of acquittance ; though had his heart been at his own disposal, he would gladly have dedicated to her service the life she had preserved. Being informed that she had left the city some days before, on a visit to Mr. Ashmole, at South Lambeth, he proceeded to Turret House, where he was courteously received by that gentleman, to whom he explained the purport of his visit. Instead, however, of being enabled to gain an interview with Constantia, he received from her a cold message, intimating that she had never doubted his being the most punctual of all debtors, and that as there were now no further

accounts to settle between them, she would dispense with his future visits. Having satisfied his conscience, as far as he was enabled to do so, and feeling somewhat piqued at this repulsive communication, which he conceived to be calculated to lower him with Mr. Ashmole, he abruptly quitted the house, and returned to his own apartments at Whitehall, fully determined to obey the unceremonious notice he had received, and to drop an acquaintance, the continuance of which, by again bringing him in communication with Julia, might only serve to foster a passion which every prudential consideration most imperatively called upon him to forget.

The serious impressions which his escape from the plague had awakened, were not of any long continuance. If the Queen, with her deeper-rooted religious principles, and more habitual rigour of morality, had been obliged to adapt herself to the licentiousness with which she was surrounded, it was not likely that a youth

of ardent passions would be enabled to resist the whirl of Court dissipation, that brought every thing within its vortex. It was as difficult to avoid the contagion of the moral as of the physical plague; and Jocelyn, who had been assailed by the one, was now as deeply tainted by the other infection,—of which he was indeed peculiarly susceptible from the state of his feelings. Spite of all his worldly wisdom and cold prudence, his bosom retained enough of its attachment to Julia to render him not only indifferent to every other beauty, but dissatisfied with himself and out of humour with the world; a predicament in which he flew to the common but vain expedient of endeavouring to derive from the senses that pleasure which was denied to the heart, by making libertinism a substitute for love. So far as licentious companions could advance this hopeful project, he had every assistance that could be desired; for he was now on intimate terms with the Duke of Buckingham; his former friendship with Rochester and

the Duke of Monmouth was cemented by community of dissipation; and Sedley, Etherege, and Killigrew were received into the number of his intimates.

Under such auspices he plunged into all the dissolute courses of the time, with the ignorance as well as with the zeal of a novice. He gave suppers, and lived upon a scale of expenditure that speedily involved him in embarrassment; he lounged about Covent Garden; he haunted the taverns and the play-houses; he took one of the actresses of the Duke's theatre under his special protection, and furnished apartments for her, opposite to those of Moll Davies, the King's mistress, in Suffolk Street. But this *liaison* was speedily dissolved. His friend, Lord Rochester, introduced himself into the house, under the disguise of the lady's cousin, a country bumpkin from Yorkshire, which he performed so admirably, that although he dined with Jocelyn and sang several clownish songs, he remained undiscovered, and was allowed

to accompany his pretended relation to the Mulberry Garden, whence, instead of restoring her to Suffolk-street, he carried her off in triumph to his own house at Westminster. Not that he had any attachment to the woman, whom he had presently spurned away from him again; but that he enjoyed the joke, was proud of his powers of mimicry, and delighted in an opportunity of outwitting and laughing at a friend. In further proof that he was a greenhorn in the practices of a modish life, Jocelyn was weak enough to take his friend's behaviour in dudgeon, and actually to call upon him for satisfaction, an instance of simplicity at which his lordship laughed most heartily. "My dear Faunus," he exclaimed, "surely it were better to sing Pepys's song of 'Beauty, retire!' and give the Fair Inconstant to the winds, than to be tragical and heroical about a trull. Because you have lost your wench, you need not lose your temper, still less your friend, least of all your own life. Fight for a petticoat! Fie, fie! you should

know better. If the King cannot keep his mistresses to himself, why should the Queen's private secretary expect to do so? As for me, I am no fighter. I am a coward upon principle, as I told you when I ran away with my wife. There is nothing so absurdly over-rated as personal courage, than which I positively know not a more common-place and vulgar quality. Fools and barbarians invariably possess it in exact proportion to their ignorance and ferocity, and, after all, they are eclipsed by the brutes, because they are still more irrational. Psha!—away with grim looks, my man of the woods, and let us be merry. How say you? shall we scour the quarters, and call upon Peg Hughes, Nell Gwyn, and Mrs. Knight,—visit the Italian Puppet, or Polichinello in Moorfields,—hie to St. James's Park to see the pelican toss up the flat-fish and catch them,—take wine at the Rhenish, tipplesack at the Heaven Tavern,—or burnt brandy at the Devil,—punch at the St. John's Head, or buttered ale at Wood's in the Pell-mell.—look in at either of the theatres,—play a game at

tennis, cards, or dice,—find our way to Clerkenwell, and talk philosophy with the crazy Duchess of Newcastle,—or walk to Barn-elms and discuss poetry and botany with Abraham Cowley ?”

Here was a copious choice of recreations ; but Jocelyn, not being in a mood to partake of any, simply declared, that he should spend the morning at home, and that he was so far convinced, by his lordship’s raillery, as to say, that he forgave him, if he could forgive himself.

“Then never was any reconciliation more complete,” cried Rochester ; “for I not only forgive myself, but applaud myself to the very skies. Fare thee well, my Faunus ! Since thou wilt not join my rambles, I will return to end them here ; and so I may sing to thee, as the Syren did to Ulysses,*—

Well, well, Ulysses, then I see,

I shall not have thee here ;

And therefore I will come to thee,

And take my fortune there.”

* In Hymen’s Triumph, “a Pastoral Tragi-comedy,” by Daniel. 4to. 1623.

Jocelyn consoled himself for his inconstant Perdita, by installing another in the lodgings in Suffolk-street, but he was doomed to be unfortunate in his connections of this nature. His second inamorata, a dancer at the King's Theatre, happened to hit the fancy of the Duke of Monmouth; and, as a rich peer is always preferable to a poor commoner, she only remained with her present protector till she had extorted from him a valuable diamond necklace, when she decamped, and was admitted into his grace's establishment. Both the friends who had thus eased him of his Dulcineas, had wives of their own, to whom they were under the greatest obligations, for both had married large heiresses, who were, at the same time, virtuous and accomplished women. Jocelyn was so shocked that he became misanthropical, and, with the usual perverse logic, that makes the world at large responsible for the mistakes of the individual, he pronounced all women to be false, and all friends to be treacherous, because he had chosen his

specimens of each among wantons and profligates. By an equal distortion of reason, he persuaded himself that he had a right to retaliate upon others the wrongs he had received from his associates, and he accordingly became a convert to the principle, that in love, as in war, all stratagems are fair. Walton had disappeared from the time he had lent him the money ; the salary of his office was quite inadequate to his expenditure ; he was exposed to the assaults of duns, and even to the pursuit of bailiffs, and thus nothing was wanting to constitute him a fine gentleman, and a man of fashion, as those characters were understood and practised at the licentious Court of Charles II.

In the midst of all this dissipation, he had in vain endeavoured to banish Julia's image from his heart. His experiment had utterly failed. The satiety and disgust, which, in ingenuous minds, so quickly follows a course of sensual indulgence, began to annoy him with their con-punctious visitings ; he discovered that he had

been foolish as well as criminal; and perhaps felt more vexed at the error of his judgment, than at all his deviations from morality. In the yearnings of his unsatisfied heart, he betook himself, one morning, to Alderman Staunton's, in the City, without any definite object, but in the vague hope that he might gather some tidings, he knew not what, relative to Julia. In this expectation he was disappointed. The merchant appeared to be frightened at the very idea of his having any correspondence with the inmates of Haelbeck, or knowledge of their proceedings; most earnestly requesting, that his name might never be coupled with that of the unfortunate exile. He turned the subject as quickly as possible, as if there were danger even in alluding to it; and, after informing him that Miss Beverning was on a visit to him at his country-house, near Hampton Court, he pleaded an appointment with Sir Josiah Child, respecting some of the new East India Stock, and wished him good morning.

As he was returning from Aldersgate-street,

he observed himself to be dogged by two men, whom he presently recognised to be bailiffs, and who, by their motions, were evidently holding him in pursuit. Unacquainted as he was with the City, he had little hope of eluding them by availing himself of the intricacy of the streets; but he had such good confidence in the activity of his legs, as not to be afraid of any competitor in a fair contest of speed. He turned down the first street that offered, and again out of that into another, walking as fast as he could, for he would not condescend to run until the danger became more pressing. This period was not long deferred; his pursuers, who had no such delicacy as to their pace, not only kept sight of him as he threaded the streets, but gained upon him so rapidly that he was soon put to his speed. Unfortunately for the beaux of those days, they were much more conspicuous in their attire, and consequently had much less chance of escape, than their modern successors. Jocelyn wore a richly-embroidered doublet of

deer-coloured velvet with silver buttons and loops, the collar standing on end with plaiting of the same metal ; his philamott, or gold-coloured cloak, was edged with a deep lace ; a Buckingham or Montero hat covered his dark flowing and scented perriwig ; his band was trimmed with pointe d'Espagne, and a profusion of well-gummed satin ribbons, of orange-colour, red, and tawney, decorated his hat, his sword, the knees of his black cannon hose, his russet shoes, his perriwig, and, in short, every part of his person to which they could be attached ; such silken trappings being at that moment an indispensable appendage to every man of fashion.*

Such a gaudy apparition, rustling and flutter-

* “ It was a fine silken thing which I spied walking the other day through Westminster Hall, that had as much ribbon about him as would have plundered six shops, and set up twenty country pedlars ; all his body was drest like a maypole or a Tom o’ Bedlam’s cap. A frigate, newly rigged, kept not half such a clatter in a storm, as this puppet’s streamers did when the wind was in his shrouds ; the motion was wonderful to behold, and the well chosen colours were red, orange, and blue, of well gum’d satin, which argued a happy fancy.”—*Evelyn’s Tyrannus, or the Mode.*

ing through the air like a huge painted butterfly, was not likely to be lost to the inquiries of his pursuers, even if he escaped for a few moments from their sight: and, as he was obliged every now and then to stop and take breath, the bailiffs, tracking him with the patient perseverance of hounds, were sure to appear just as he had flattered himself that they were fairly distanced and at fault. After keeping up this sort of flight through a variety of streets, with the names of which he was unacquainted, he at length found himself in the Artillery-walk, adjoining Bunhill Fields, and being nearly exhausted with his efforts, he turned suddenly up a passage, resolved to seek shelter in the first house that should offer, and thus take the chance of eluding his pursuers. A side-door presenting itself at the entrance of the passage, he pulled the latch; it opened; he entered as quietly as possible; again closed the door; and found himself in a small ante-room, hung round with shelves of dark old-fashioned looking books, most of them in folio or quarto. In one corner was a

small recess in which stood an open organ, the appearance of which indicated that it was an old possession of its proprietor, and was in habitual use. On a circular table in the middle of the chamber were two folio Bibles, one in Hebrew and one in English: and on the mantel-shelf were several pipes, with a tea-cup containing tobacco; the smell of the room, as well as its dusky hue, sufficiently attesting that it was often fumigated by the use of that fragrant herb. From these appearances, it might be conjectured, that the house belonged to a man of mean condition and studious habits; and while Jocelyn was speculating upon the probable profession of its owner, a deep, solemn, and sonorous voice from an adjoining chamber exclaimed aloud:—

“ The floating vessel swam
Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow,
Rode tilting o’er the waves; all dwellings else
Flood overwhelm’d, and them, with all their pomp,
Deep under water roll’d; sea covered sea,
Sea without shore; and in their palaces,
Where luxury late reign’d, sea-monsters whelp’d,
And stabled.”

Under any other circumstances he would have continued a delighted listener to this sublime strain; but just at this moment he saw his pursuers making inquiries at the opposite side of the street; and observing that, from the lowness of the window, they might look into the room and discover him, he determined to wave all ceremony; and accordingly, opening the door of communication, he stepped into the adjoining apartment. It was larger and lighter than the one he had quitted, and the books it contained were scattered about with greater confusion. Fronting him, in an arm-chair, there sat a venerable-looking blind old man, his curling grey hair falling down upon either shoulder, and his sightless orbs upturned to heaven, as in the enthusiasm of the moment he continued his recitation, apparently unconscious of the intrusion. By his side was a young female seated at a desk and writing, behind whom was another, with her back towards Jocelyn, as she stood upon a chair to reach down a book.

These figures were Milton, dictating the *Paradise Lost* to his daughters. Although several years had elapsed since Jocelyn had seen him in the library of Hampton Court, the peculiar and striking physiognomy of the bard were not to be mistaken, and he recognised him immediately. He who had been the inmate of a palace, the friend and counsellor of a sovereign, and presented to foreign ambassadors as the ornament of his court, was now in this obscure retreat, living in comparative poverty and neglect, and only indebted to the oblivion, into which he had fallen, for his escape from persecution and danger. Yet the moral grandeur of his present humble station atoned to him for all the worldly distinctions he had lost, for he felt assured that he was laying the foundations of an immortality upon earth. The Genius of Puritanism, surviving in his bosom, was preparing to assert its powers, to avenge its fame; and this lofty conviction not only

upheld him in his reverses, but imparted to them a character of superiority and triumph.

The daughter, who had been writing, gazed upon Jocelyn as he entered with a mute astonishment; the other, who had been taking down the book, no sooner beheld him as she turned round, than she uttered a faint cry of alarm.—“What ails thee, Mary, my child?” inquired the bard.—“Speak, Deborah,” he continued, after a short pause, “and tell me, since I am disobeyed by your sister, what means this brawling interruption of my meditations?”

With many apologies for his intrusion, Jocelyn now briefly explained the circumstances that had led to it, imploring protection for a short time, but offering to retire immediately should his longer presence be deemed inadmissible. The bard declared, that as his humble residence had been a Zoar and a place of refuge to himself, so should it prove to the pilgrim and the

wayfarer that sought the protection of its roof, beneath which he invited Jocelyn to remain until the danger had passed away, but concluded by ordering both his daughters to retire instantly to their own apartment. This injunction they appeared to obey with some hesitation, casting sundry glances at their uninvited visitant, whose striking figure, not less than the inordinate finery of his dress, were calculated to excite no small admiration in young ladies who had for a long time been habituated only to such homely and mechanical figures, as were to be encountered in the sequestered and religious precincts of Bunhill Row.

Somewhat ashamed of the occasion which had thus introduced him to Milton, conscious that he must appear in a contemptible light to so stern a moralist, and too much awed by his superior talent, as well as virtue, to attempt beguiling the time by conversation, Jocelyn staid not a moment longer than he considered

necessary for his safety, when he most earnestly returned thanks for the shelter he had found, and took his departure. Soon after quitting the door, he saw an empty coach, whose driver, for the bribe of half-a-crown, agreed to carry him to London Bridge, where he took water, and reached his apartments at Whitehall without any further let or impediment.

He had regularly communicated to Sir John his appointment under the Queen, and his favourable prospects at the court, although, for obvious reasons, he had never made any allusion to his pecuniary difficulties. Having now occasion to communicate to his father the result of an interview with the Lord Chancellor respecting the Brambletye suit, his urgent embarrassments led him to solicit a loan of money, which he promised to return when he should receive his next payment from the Queen. Although no very punctual correspondent in general, Sir John lost no time in sending the following answer to the application:—

“Gadzooks, Jocelyn, I knew of old that you were passionate as gunpowder, peppery as a deviled drumstick, and if you are your father’s son you have a right to be so; but I never thought you were a wag and a joker. Borrow money of me! ’Ods heart! if it were not for the gout, I should laugh till I frightened all the fishes in the moat. You know well enough how I have been treated; you know that Rowley’s famous act of oblivion and indemnity proves to be oblivion to his friends and indemnity to his enemies. Money, you comical dog! We Cavaliers may well quote London’s Farewell to the Parliament, and sing,

‘Farewell plate and money, with hey, with hey,
Farewell, plate and money, with hoe;
’Tis going down the water,
Or something near the matter,
And public faith’s going after,
With hey, trolly, lolly, loe!’

“What little comes in, falls into the clutches of the damned Dutch Vrouw, from whose grasp

you may extract it when you can pick powder out of pitch with a feather ; or wool out of birdlime with a stalk of thistledown. A bots upon the plague ! that carried off so many jolly wenches, and left her ladyship behind. Perhaps she was spared as one of the family, for I 'm sure she has been plague enough to me. Once more, thou bantering blade, I am bare as a beggar's wallet, poor as the alm's-box at the church door,—so talk not to me of money, unless you come as a lender, not a borrower.

“ 'Sblood, Sir, what means the Chancellor by saying he cannot hear my cause out of its course, but that I may depend on having justice ? He lies, for delay is ruin, and therefore the worst of injustice. Since Nan Hyde married the Duke, I suppose we are to stand in awe of his lordship's big wig ; but egad ! if I were not tied by the leg, I would beard him on the woolsack, and tell him plump that it would be better for both of us if he would attend more to Brambletye House, and less to

Dunkirk House.* It's a burning shame of Rowley to allow such delays, especially towards an old servant and soldier, who had foot in stirrup and sword in hand for so many years, and ought not to be forgotten now, that he has a gouty shoe upon one, and a flesh-brush in the other.

“The black ghost comes out as usual with the owls and bats, and flits round Brambletye, and spits her spite, and curses and swears, and talks to the moon worse than ever. The cowardly knaves are all afraid of her, for they now say she is a witch, or else they might have caught her before this, and have executed my order to trail her nine times round the moat. Jack Whittaker, however, had a chase after her last week, and though the Jezabel got away, as usual, we have reason to hope that he wounded

* A nick-name bestowed by his enemies upon the magnificent mansion he was then building in St. James's Street, the expense of which, it was intended to insinuate, was defrayed out of the bribe-money, received for the sale of Dunkirk.

her with a large stone that he sent hissing at her head. By the bye, honest Jack talks of leaving me, unless ale be substituted for swipes, which the Vrouw won't hear of, and therefore you may suppose I don't often get a bottle of claret. — Money, quotha ! you are a wag, Jocelyn ; and a saucy Jackanapes, my boy ; and a flouting malapert, my darling ; so no more at present from your poor, gouty, disappointed, pillaged, forgotten, but still affectionate and stout-hearted father, John Compton.

“P. S.—Harkye, Sir ! what business have you to want money with such a liberal salary from the Queen ? I forgot to ask that question. Zounds ! Sir ; don't expect a farthing from me. If you fall into the wild extravagance of the Court, I shall cast you off, and not care a whiff of tobacco about you. Indeed, I am not sure that I do now ; so once more, God bless you my own dear boy.—J. C.”

On the following morning, upon returning to his apartment, after having been in attendance

upon the Queen, he found a parcel carefully wrapped up in baize, and sealed at either end, upon opening which he discovered a small oaken box, and the following letter:

“ You have been wandering long enough in the ways of unrighteousness. Are they the paths of peace? Let your own bosom resolve this question. For shame! for shame! Leave vice to fools and knaves. Your intellect is too clear, your heart too good, to allow you even a momentary gratification in its indulgence. Crime will only aggravate your unhappiness. It is therefore without an aim, and without an excuse. This money is not sent to minister to new errors, but to enable you to withdraw with honour from your old ones.

“ A FRIEND.”

On breaking open the box, it proved to be filled with gold, to a considerable amount, very neatly packed, but without any further paper, or clue that might lead to a discovery of the mysterious and generous donor. It had been

left by a man dressed in a grey Campaign suit, with black and red points, and wearing a brown periwig, who said that no answer was required, and disappeared immediately after delivering the parcel. The porter had never seen him before, though he thought he might recognize him were he again to meet him.

This communication, so different in its matter and manner from Sir John's, excited various emotions in Jocelyn's breast. Curiosity for some time predominated over every other feeling; he scrutinized the hand-writing, he examined the box, he inspected the seal, but still he remained as much in the dark as ever. There was no evidence to guide him, conjecture was useless; and he was therefore compelled to leave the solution of the enigma to time and chance. A second perusal of the letter awakened a different train of thought. He was softened by the discovery that he possessed a generous, though unknown, friend, in that world which he had been lately beginning to contemplate

with a splenetic disgust: while his heart, upbraiding him with the truth of the sentiments he had been reading, whispered to him, that although he had merited reproach for the past, he might best testify his gratitude to his munificent monitor, by avoiding it for the future. At once gratified and humiliated, he made vows of amendment, which, at least, evinced a sincere repentance for the moment, although they might not always exercise a governing influence upon his subsequent conduct.

Since his accidental encounter with the bailiffs in the city, he had rarely ventured from his apartments, except in the performance of his official duties, in which he was protected from arrest by the privilege and precincts of the court; but, as he now intended to appropriate the gift to the purposes indicated by its donor, he sallied cheerfully forth, that he might himself convey the agreeable tidings to the parties interested. On passing Whitehall, he observed a considerable crowd around the doors of the ban-

queting-house, and having learned, upon inquiry, that the King was at that moment touching for the evil, a ceremony which he had never seen, he walked into the palace, and was borne along by the throng until he found himself in the royal presence. So great had been the multitude of people with their sick children, besieging the door of the King's surgeon on the morning before, to obtain the certificates that were to entitle them to be touched, that several had been crushed to death; notwithstanding which calamity, a prodigious crowd was again assembled to witness the process, and all were eagerly pressing into the banqueting-room.

In this magnificent hall, beneath a canopy of state, his Majesty was seated in his robes; the surgeons in attendance caused the sick to be carried up to the throne, where they placed themselves upon their knees, when the King stroked their faces or cheeks with both his hands at once; at which instant, a chaplain

in his formalities, said,—“He put his hands upon them, and he healed them,” which words were repeated to every patient. When they had been all touched they came up again in the same order, and the other chaplain kneeling, and having gold pieces stamped with the figure of an angel, strung on a white ribbon that hung upon his arm, delivered them one by one to his Majesty, who put them about the necks of the sufferers as they passed, whilst the first chaplain repeated, “That is the true light who came into the world.”—A Gospel had been previously read; an Epistle now followed, with the Liturgy: prayers were put up for the sick, upon whom a blessing was pronounced; and lastly, the Lord Chamberlain and Comptroller of the Household brought a basin, ewer, and towel, for his Majesty to wash. The spacious and painted hall in which the ceremony took place; the splendour that invested the King, as he sate in state; the religious forms that gave solemnity to the proceedings; the cadaverous faces

of the patients, lighted up as some of them were by a ghastly hope; the countenances of their parents and relations agitated by various emotions; the eager eyes of the multitude all fixed upon the King with an expression of devout wonder; and the dead silence of the assemblage, constituted a scene that was deeply affecting, even to a disbeliever in its efficacy. That the ignorant multitude should lend themselves to such a delusion, that the diseased wretches should catch at any phantom that flattered them with a cure, was neither strange nor inconsistent; but that one who was notoriously without religion or morals, who was equally exceptionable as a monarch and as a man, should lend himself to this fraud, should assume a miraculous gift from heaven, should presume to rival his Saviour, and, like the magicians of Pharaoh, attempt to compete with those whom God himself had endowed with supernatural power, did appear to Jocelyn a most impious and daring mockery of Heaven.

One circumstance in the proceeding had interested him more than all the mummery with which it was invested. His attention had been particularly directed to the agonized countenance of a poor woman, who was watching the progress of her diseased boy towards the throne. On a previous occasion he had been disappointed of obtaining the royal touch, and her fear lest he should again prove unsuccessful, kept every feature of her face upon the rack of suspense ; but no sooner had she seen the King's hand passed across his cheeks, than her maternal feelings drove from her mind every consideration of place and circumstance, and uttering a shriek of joy that made the silent hall echo, she clapped her hands together, crying out,—“ He is cured ! he is cured ! he is cured ! ” and fell into an hysterical passion of loud laughter. Jocelyn subsequently saw her sitting in one corner of the hall with her boy upon her kness, kissing him, and fondling him, and weeping into

his bosom with a gush of uncontrollable tenderness.

Just as the assemblage were pouring out of the banqueting-room into the street, it chanced that the Duke of York, who had been hunting upon Hounslow Heath, was passing along the front of Whitehall, accompanied by a guard of horse, a circumstance which occasioned a considerable pressure and some confusion among the throng of people. In the midst of the disturbance, however, the keen eye of Jocelyn recognised a female figure on the opposite side of the street that electrified him with sudden surprise ;—it was Julia Strickland, leaning on the arm of a gentleman, whose back was towards him, and who, from the transient glance that he could obtain of his figure, appeared to be a stranger. Following the first impulse of his heart, he attempted to rush forward, and renew his acquaintance with her, but the dense crowd, pressing backwards to avoid the horses, for some time baffled all his efforts, vehe-

ment as they were, to extricate himself from the mass. No sooner was he enabled to accomplish that object, than he hurried to the Tiltyard, in which direction they had been walking ; but the objects of his search were now no longer to be seen : they had become mingled with the crowd, and had disappeared. For a considerable time he paced up and down with the greatest eagerness, gazing in all directions, and peering into the face of every female that he encountered ; but convinced at last that his pursuit was hopeless, he gave over the chace, and returned to his own apartments, fatigued in body, and not a little agitated in his mind.

CHAPTER VI.

“ I’ll read you matter deep and dangerous,
As full of peril and advent’rous spirit,
As to o’erwalk a current, roaring loud,
On the unsteadfast footing of a spear.”

SHAKSPEARE.

THE passion which had been so long smouldering in Jocelyn’s bosom, and which at one period he had imagined to be extinguished, was quickly rekindled by the unexpected appearance of Julia, although he had seen her only for a moment; while an incipient feeling of jealousy, as to the companion upon whose arm she had been leaning, convinced him that he could never bear to see her in possession of another. All his prudential dissuasives retained their full force in theory, but he began to falter

in his resolution of reducing them to practice ; and as he felt his love revive, he looked with additional distaste upon that course of dissipation to which, in the disappointment of his hopes, he had fled as a substitute, and of which he already began to feel heartily ashamed. He determined to devote himself to the discovery of Julia ; to penetrate, if possible, the mystery of her father's fate, and ascertain whether any favourable change of circumstance might have occurred to warrant an explicit declaration of his attachment. Her being in England wore an auspicious appearance ; she had most solemnly declared at Haelbeck that she would never quit her father ; he was doubtless, therefore, with her ; there was an end of the banishment ; his troubles and misfortunes, whatever was their nature, had passed away ; the cloud of ignominy that hung over him was dispersed ; he was restored to society ; and an alliance with his family would entail neither censure nor dishonour upon the party seeking it. Such was the flattering vi-

sion conjured up in a moment by his sanguine hopes ; such was the bright prospect which he trusted to be able to realize, as soon as he should have learned Julia's retreat ; and this discovery he had no doubt of speedily effecting through the instrumentality of Constantia, whose residence he could always ascertain, by means of Alderman Staunton.

Knowing, however, Constantia's strict principles, standing in some little awe of her as a monitress, and feeling by the compunctious twinges of his conscience that he had too much neglected the solemn advice she gave him upon his recovery from the plague, he determined not to appear in her presence until he had cleared himself from his debts, and was free to commence the amended life which he projected, without being humiliated by the assaults of duns. Impetuous in every thing, his hand was seldom slow to execute what his head had planned. He hired a coach, took the money with him, went round to all his creditors, and returned to his

apartments with the proud and pleasant sensation of not owing a guinea in the world. Since the encounter with the bailiffs he had been cautious of visiting any of the public places, but in the triumph of his new-born independence he determined to parade the Mall and the Parks, at it to prove to all the world his freedom from embarrassment; resolving on the following morning to commence measures for the discovery of Mr. Strickland's present retreat, and, if possible, of his past history.

In pursuance of this arrangement, he dressed himself and sallied forth to the Mall, which the keeper was at that moment sprinkling with a cement of powdered cockle-shells, to give the better rebound to the balls, as a match was to be played next day by the King and the Duke of York, against some of the courtiers. Here he met Lady Castlemaine superbly dressed in a flowered silk spagnolet, a coif of right point lace, a yellow bird's-eye hood, an embroidered boddice, and a long fringed train to her petticoat,

which was held up by a little black page, while another servant followed in a rich chocolate livery lined with amber mohair and silver buttons, leading a liver-coloured tumbler-dog by a crimson ribbon. Her Ladyship was leaning on the arm of a female companion, and chatting to a gay band of the court fops and flatterers who were dangling and flaunting around her. To one she had entrusted her silver flask of sal-ammoniac, a second carried her perfumed fan, a third had the custody of her loo mask, and a fourth of her vizor, for she was provided with both, to be used according to the state of the wind and sun. Giving a graceful swing to the pomander-ball which was attached to her side by a gold chain, she occasionally launched it in mock anger against such of the gallants as were too forward in their dalliance, none of whom, however, seemed to stand in much awe of this perfumed punishment. As she passed Jocelyn, she eyed him with a scornful toss of the head, which convinced him that

she had not forgotten the trick, by which her consent to his return had been extorted; and that although he had obtained her pardon, he was by no means absolved from her hatred.

Unsolicitous of her friendship, and determined to afford her no excuse for the exercise of her malice, he pursued his course until he found himself by the entrance of Spring Gardens, along whose palings he remembered to have skulked at the time of his escape from the Gate-house. On passing into the enclosure, he was surprised to find himself in a sylvan retreat agreeable for the solemnness of the grove, the warbling of the birds, and the occasional views it afforded of the spacious walks of St. James's. It contained thickets, arbours and alcoves, well adapted to the purposes of gallantry; while the Paradise Tavern, in the centre of the gardens, endeavoured to justify its name by beatifying the guests with various salacious condiments and beakers of Rhenish wine. From this spot he wandered into St. James's Park, and seating

himself beneath the statue of the gladiator, gazed listlessly at the elks, antelopes, roebucks, stags and deer, that were grazing before him; marked the numerous flocks of wild-fowl that were hovering about the aviary and the decoy; or listened to the singing of the birds suspended in cages from the trees, in that quarter of the park which still retains the name of the Bird Cage Walk.

From the hurried pace and eager conversation of two or three parties that passed him, and were pointing to the sky, he now first gathered that a devastating fire had broken out in the city, which was consuming all before it; and upon looking at the heavens, he marked the red and baleful glare, that indicates an extensive conflagration. So completely had love regained possession of his mind, that his first thought was the possibility of danger to Julia. She might be an inmate of Alderman Staunton's house; the fire might have broken out in that quarter; she might at that

moment be exposed to peril. This was a combination that would hardly have appeared probable except to the sensitive apprehensions of a lover; but to Jocelyn it seemed so feasible, that he resolved to hurry instantly into the city, and fly to the rescue of his mistress, for such he spiritually termed her from the moment that he imagined her life to be in jeopardy. Returning to Whitehall, for the purpose of making some previous alterations in his dress, he had the mortification of being told that the Queen desired his immediate attendance, as she had occasion for his official services. Such an order was now of rare occurrence, and, to add to his annoyance, he was detained, on the present occasion, until the night had set in.

No sooner was he liberated than he hastened to the water-side, and stepping into a wherry, desired to be rowed to the city. Being enabled to gaze down the river, the Fire, which was now not only exposed to observation without the intervention of houses,

but rendered infinitely more appalling and conspicuous by the reflection of the water, burst upon his view in all its terrific grandeur. A light, or rather a hideous glare, that belonged neither to night nor day, illuminated the whole country for ten miles round; the conflagration, as an eye-witness has recorded, throwing itself up into the air, "in a most horrid, malicious, bloody flame, not like the fine flame of an ordinary fire." As he approached London Bridge, the houses, with which it was at that time covered, were all in a blaze, describing one entire arch of fire across the whole of the river; Fish-street Hill, and the street beyond, presented another blazing bow of more than a mile in extent; above all, hung the angry and ensanguined hemisphere of the sky, which being reflected in the river below, gave to the whole scene the appearance of an immense globe of fire, of which the city formed the centre. Above ten thousand houses were all burning at once. The horrid hissing of the flames, the crackling and shaking of the

earth, and the hot sulphureous panting of the air, as it showered down fire-drops all around, suggested the idea that the elements were breaking up and contending together, preparatory to the final demolition of the world. From the universal horror and distraction of the people, as they ran to and fro, uttering the most appalling shrieks, cries, and lamentations; from the dismal noises and concussions, as the houses, churches, and towers burst, and fell thundering to the earth; from the explosion of the buildings that were blown up with gunpowder; as well as from the wrathful look of the heavens and the shuddering terror of the fire-smitten earth, it might indeed be well imagined that the day of doom was at hand, and that the world and its inhabitants were about to be swallowed up and consumed by the devouring element.

Many who had been impressed with this harrowing apprehension, felt consolation and assurance, as the wind blew away the dense masses of smoke, at the sight of the moon, now nearly

at the full. She was pursuing her unaltered course in a calm majesty of beauty, that contrasted forcibly with the desolating scene beneath, and, like the rainbow to Noah, seemed to be a sign from God that he would not destroy the world that he had made.

When Jocelyn was sufficiently recovered from his first amazement and awe, to pay some minute attention to the scene, he noticed the prodigious hurry and confusion of the river, to whose bosom all were anxious to commit their property, as the best place of security ; although, in the dismay of the moment, much was thus lost. Upon every barge and lighter, goods of all descriptions were piled up to such a height that they frequently rolled over into the water : and Jocelyn repeatedly saw virginals ; and other musical instruments, cabinets and costly furniture, floating down the stream, without any one attempting to stop them. As the night deepened, he could plainly see the flames spreading and catching from corner to corner, and leaping

from street to street, the floating flakes whirled upwards by the high wind, sometimes communicating to the wooden steeples that arrested them, and so lighting up a fearful pyramid in the air, which quickly burning down to the body of the church, became the focus of a new conflagration. In approaching the shore he beheld the people, who had remained in their houses till the fire actually touched them, clambering from the windows, and letting themselves down into boats; while the poor pigeons, not less loth to leave their dwellings, hovered about the windows and balconies till they burnt their wings and fell down.

Being prevented by the intolerable heat, as well as by the clouds of smoke, and shower of ignited particles, from landing where he first intended, he was obliged to be put ashore above Queen Hithe, where he intended to find his way to Alderman Staunton's residence. Such was the confusion, however, that none would answer his inquiries, and the devastation occa-

sioned by the flames rendered it difficult, even for one well acquainted with the town, to find his way. The inexorable element raging and hissing, and lapping one building after another, with its myriad tongues, into its devouring maw, drove the terrified population from street to street, as if it were determined to expel the inhabitants altogether from London, and reduce the whole city to a waste of ruins. Enabled by the ghastly glare thrown upon every object, to read the names of the streets, and having a general impression of the direction in which Aldergate Street was situated, he at length reached it; happy to find that it had been hitherto spared from the dreadful visitation of the flames. A shudder crept through his veins, as he beheld the house in which he had been attacked by the plague, which was still shut up, and apparently uninhabited. As he gazed upwards at the railed passage on the roof, constructed as a security against the very calamity with which the dwelling was now menaced, he saw male

and female figures moving along it; but although they stood out in bright relief, emblazoned by the fire in front, and having a dark cloud of smoke behind them, he could not recognize any of the party. Had either Constantia or Julia been of the number he thought he must have identified them; but his anxiety could not be appeased with any thing less than a certainty that they were not likely to be exposed to danger. Late as was the hour, he thought the offer of his services in such a critical emergency, might justify a visit, even at midnight, and he accordingly knocked at the door; a summons which he was obliged to repeat with increased energy, before it was noticed. When it was at length opened, he was informed that the Alderman and his family were at his country-house, the figures whom he had seen on the roof being only the servants. Constantia, he was given to understand, was still visiting the family: but as to Miss Strickland, the servant declared that he knew no such person, and had never even heard the name.

Relieved from his immediate apprehensions by this intelligence, although the statement relative to Julia had thrown a considerable damp upon his hopes, he prepared to return to Whitehall, hoping by making a circuit, to avoid the conflagration, and reach his home without obstruction. His ignorance of the city, however, occasioned him to emerge opposite to St. Paul's Cathedral, which at that moment resembled a stupendous volcano or mountain of fire, the flames uniting above it in a blazing pyramid that threatened to extend the conflagration to the sky itself, the stones flying like grenades, the melted lead running down the streets in a stream, and the very pavements glowing with fiery redness, so as to scorch the feet of all who approached. From this dangerous position he retreated with all speed, and making his way to Holborn, succeeded at last in reaching Whitehall, completely exhausted with his wanderings, and both agitated and saddened in mind by the appalling spectacles he had been witnessing.

At an early hour on the following morning, Jocelyn, who had been prevented from sleeping by the noise of explosions, the rumbling of carts carrying away goods to the country, and the general disturbance of the neighbourhood, arose and hastily dressed himself to accompany the King and the Duke of York, who were going into the City with a detachment of the guards, to give orders about blowing up houses in different directions, so as to check the progress of the devouring element. For this purpose, he provided himself with a horse, and the cavalcade set forward at a brisk pace towards the City. As they advanced, he observed over the burning town a floating mass of dark smoke, calculated to exceed fifty miles in length, which, passing athwart the sun's disk, hung suspended in the air like an ominous and dismal banner: nor were there wanting weak and credulous persons to declare, as it was occasionally agitated by the wind, that they saw a hand coming out from the sky, to shake and wave it as a sign of

heavenly wrath. The strong eastern wind still continuing to drive the fiery torrent westward, many of the inhabitants about Temple-Bar were already beginning to remove their goods, one of whom had deposited before his house a considerable quantity of loose straw, to be used in packing his furniture. A burning flake from the Cathedral of St. Paul's falling among the heap, presently set it in a blaze, and the noise and confusion of the accident occasioning the servant at the next dwelling to open the street door, a sudden blast of wind carried the whole ignited mass into the hall, and the house was almost instantly enveloped in flames. The servant was probably suffocated by the smoke in the first instance, for he appeared no more; but in a few moments an elegantly-dressed female was seen in one of the upper balconies, whence, after casting a terrified look at the flames bursting from the window beneath, she again rushed back into the house, as if to seek some other method of escape.

After a little delay, some of the neighbours procured a ladder and placed it against the wall, when one of them ventured up to the rescue of the unfortunate lady, but the summit of a stack of chimneys falling over at the time, dashed him to the ground, sorely maimed and disabled ; and as the remainder of the pile was tottering and threatening every moment to come down, no second adventurer could be found to trust himself to the ladder under such perilous circumstances. Just at this juncture, the royal cavalcade reached the spot, and at the same instant the lady rushed forwards, into the balcony, uttered a cry of dismay, and sank down, either overcome by her terrors, or rendered helpless and dizzy by the smoke. Momentary as was the glance that the King obtained of her face, he saw that she was beautiful, a circumstance which would at any time have interested him in her fate, and which in the present imminence of her danger, excited his sympathy in the most intense degree.—“ Save the lady in the blue and

yellow balcony!" he exclaimed with a loud voice.—"Fifty guineas to any one who saves her!"—

Several of the bystanders echoed the cry, but the heaving and rocking of the impending brick-work, deterred them all from attempting to claim the prize. There was one, however, in his retinue who had contemplated the female with a tenfold deeper thrill of interest and agony than the King. Jocelyn had instantly recognised her to be Julia Strickland, and the delay of his appearing as her rescuer was no longer than the time required for throwing himself from his horse, and bursting through the intervening mob. This was no sooner accomplished, than he rushed up the ladder with a desperate energy, gained the balcony, snatched the insensible Julia into his arms, and was preparing to descend, when a gush of dense smoke from one of the windows, concealed him for a moment from the spectators, whose terrified cries testified their apprehension that both were lost. The

mass, however, rolled away, and Jocelyn brought down his precious charge in safety ; but utterly spent with his exertions, almost blinded with the flame, and half suffocated with the smoke, he had no sooner reached the ground, than he staggered and fell into the arms of one of the spectators, completely deprived for the moment of all power and consciousness.

On recovering his senses, he found himself in an apothecary's shop on the outside of Temple-Bar, attended by a shop-boy, who was holding sal-ammoniac to his nose, and a strange gentleman, who no sooner observed his returning animation than he tendered him a cordial, which Jocelyn swallowed, and from its restorative properties derived an almost immediate benefit. As soon as he could speak, he inquired in an incoherent manner about the lady he had rescued, so anxious to learn whether she had been restored to animation, and what had become of her, that his feelings almost overpowered his utterance. " You may be quite

easy respecting the lady," replied the stranger ; " she came to herself almost immediately upon being fanned with the cold air, and I warrant she is safe enough, for the King would not move from the spot till a coach was procured, when he whispered to one of his attendants, who stepped into it with the lady, and off they drove. His Majesty is ever kind and considerate when a pretty wench is in trouble." There was a sneer upon the speaker's face as he gave this information, which Jocelyn did not notice, and he was much more gratified by his tidings at the moment than he found reason to be afterwards.—"And to whom am I indebted for taking charge of me and conveying me hither?" inquired Jocelyn.

" In good sooth, Sir," replied the stranger, " if I had not exercised authority after you fell into my arms, the smoke you had been swallowing might have proved your last meal upon earth ; for some of the rabble, under the notion of bringing you to yourself, began to throw water in your face with a liberality that was

rather likely to produce suffocation than resuscitation. Conjecturing that quiet and a cordial were more likely to restore you than uproar and cold water, I assisted in conveying you into this shop, and I am most happy that your recovery has done such speedy justice to my medical skill."

Jocelyn expressed the deepest sense of obligation for his interference, and gladly accepted the further offer of his accompanying him to his lodgings, as he hardly felt sufficiently recruited to return thither without assistance. During their walk to Whitehall, the stranger introduced himself to Jocelyn as Colonel Rathborn, one of the disbanded officers of the old army; and having sate with him some time, withdrew, promising to call on the next day to inquire after his health. Of this he was not enabled to give a very favourable account, when his new friend repeated his visit; for the water which had been so profusely poured over him when he was in a violent heat from the effect of the fire, as well as of his own exertions, had brought on so severe a cold

and fever, that he was for some days unable to quit his apartment. The agitation of his mind rather irritated his complaint ; for it was sufficiently vexatious to have lost Julia in the very moment of regaining her, without the aggravation of being thus imprisoned by sickness, when his whole soul was bent upon following up the discovery he had so accidentally made.

To these annoyances were now added apprehensions of the most painful and jealous nature. Colonel Rathborn, who had become a daily visitant to his sick chamber, began to instil into his ear the darkest suspicions of the motives by which the King had been actuated in interesting himself for Julia's preservation. He recalled his libidinous character, his notorious profligacy with regard to women, his secret haunts about the palace and elsewhere, for the gratification of his libertinism ; and coupling these dispositions with the fact of his even neglecting the urgent occasion that called him into the city until a carriage could be procured, his whispering to

one of his myrmidons, and desiring him to accompany the lady to a place of safety, he submitted to his auditor whether a doubt could be entertained, as to the real motives of his conduct. These suggestions were indeed more than plausible; and when he saw they had wrought their effect upon Jocelyn, by exciting him to a passion of jealousy, he began to inveigh bitterly against the general depravity of the Court, the degradation of the country, and the ruinous tendency of all the King's measures; obscurely intimating that public affairs had now arrived at a crisis that called upon every true-born Englishman to come boldly forward, and lend his assistance towards averting the impending calamities.

Jocelyn acknowledged the demoralised and humiliating state of the country, and professed his readiness to contribute towards its regeneration, could any honourable mode of effecting that object be pointed out to him. By dark and mysterious hints, the Colonel gave him to understand that a plan was already in agitation for remedying the

evils of the state, that some of the most distinguished characters were at that moment engaged in maturing it, and that its success, of which there could be no doubt, would redound not less to the interest and advancement, than to the glory of the parties embarked in it. When pressed to be more explicit, he declared that the time was not yet ripe for a full communication, quoted long passages from the Revelations, whose accomplishment he pronounced to be at hand, and talked so wildly about astrological predictions, and a ruling planet, portending the subversion of monarchy, that Jocelyn began to set him down for one of those narrow-minded and desperate enthusiasts, whose society it would be much safer to avoid than to cultivate. Rathborn's attentions, however, during his sickness, continued unremitted, and the service he had conferred would not allow Jocelyn to refuse his urgent solicitations to dine with him at Battersea; after which visit he determined to drop his acquaintance altogether, and not listen any more to dark and unde-

finer propositions, of which he only understood enough to see that they were of a dangerous nature.

On the very first day accordingly of his quitting his chamber, he took boat with the Colonel, who had come to escort him to his residence, and proceeded to Battersea. The house was a lone and sufficiently forlorn-looking tenement, standing in the fields at a little distance from the water. "I have invited a few friends to meet you," said the Colonel, as they debarked, "with whom I wish you to become better acquainted; they are men of right religion, of approved zeal and courage, and, what is of more consequence, of lucky horoscopes; they are associated with me as brethren in the great work; and if, after this day's meeting, they pronounce you fitted for election, you may perhaps have the honour."

The clashing of swords and the uproar of angry voices, sounding from the house as they approached, cut short the remainder of his

harangue, and occasioned him "to draw his sword and rush forward, exclaiming—"Ha! are we betrayed? are we surprised? let every man defend himself to the last, and die the death of the righteous!" Instinctively drawing his sword, and following the Colonel, Jocelyn hastened into the house and entered a back room, where a scene presented itself which for some time completely baffled all his attempts towards elucidating its meaning. In the middle of the room stood his old acquaintance, Winky Boss, surrounded by six or eight gaunt figures, whose shabby-genteel dress, reckless looks, and ferocious gestures, indicated broken fortunes, and desperate character. Several of them were collaring the Dutchman, cursing, swearing, and threatening by turns; all had their swords pointed at his throat; while Boss, whose eyes were winking in double-quick time, repeatedly ejaculated—"Niet een woord!—niet een woord! —Ik kan niet spreken een woord van Engelsch:"—intimating that he could not speak a single word of English.

To explain the perilous predicament in which he had unwarily placed himself, it may be necessary to state that Winky Boss, having found his way to England in search of his master, had learned the sad tidings of his death from Mr. Ashmole, who not only invited him to remain at South Lambeth, till an opportunity should occur for his returning to Holland, but made him a handsome present in money. With the latter he soon obtained consolation for all sorrows and disappointments, by betaking himself to the Dolphin, a public-house at Battersea, famous for its strong spirits and good tobacco. Unfortunately for Winky Boss, liquor only made him more thirsty, without ever producing intoxication, although it might render his faculties somewhat muddy and obtuse. In this drowsy plight, after wandering about the fields of Battersea for some time, he chanced to pass the back of Colonel Rathborn's house, and, beholding through an open window, a table spread out with glasses and bottles, he very unceremoniously

climbed into the room to allay the thirst with which he was tormented, taking it for granted, that as he had money in his pocket to defray the reckoning, he could not be encountering any very serious risk.

Contenting himself with the remainder of one bottle, an instance of moderation rather attributable to drowsiness than abstemiousness, he withdrew behind a large screen in one corner of the room, intending to enjoy a comfortable nap; but before he could compose himself to sleep, a party of Colonel Rathbone's friends and accomplices entered the apartment, and, having closed the window, began to discourse of subjects that involved life and death to themselves, and which in Boss's apprehension would be very likely to extend the same consequences to himself, should he happen to be discovered. In this ticklish predicament his only chance consisted in observing a profound silence, a mode of self-preservation in which he persevered with laudable prudence, until he perceived on a small shelf above

his head, a green bottle with a label round its neck, on which was inscribed that most attractive of all words,—“ Schiedam ”—the name by which his favourite liquor was then designated. With a most exemplary caution did he slowly steal up his hand to embrace the neck of the beloved bottle, which he would have safely transferred to his own mouth, but that a small wine-glass which had escaped his observation, was displaced in the process, and fell smashing to the ground. Up started the company in an instant,—down went the screen,—out flew the swords,—and the unintentional spy, dragged into the centre of the room, presently saw half a dozen weapons pointed at his throat, and became instantly aware that his only chance of safety was to affect an utter ignorance of English.

His appearance and his sputtering language were proof positive that he was a Dutchman; but it was not so easy to establish the negative, and convince them that he had not understood

a word of what they had been saying. Some were for putting him to death at once, and throwing him at nightfall into the river; others, believing in his ignorance of the language, recommended that he should be dismissed, and that their place of rendezvous should be changed to prevent his giving any information; during which discussion, Winky Boss adjusted his pipe, and arranged his discomposed clothes with an appearance of perfect unconcern and a vacant look of ignorance. One who assumed some authority over his companions at length observed, that where six or eight lives might be secured by the sacrifice of one, there was no room for further hesitation, and therefore proposed that in order to implicate each equally in the responsibility for his murder, they should all fall upon him and dispatch him, when he gave the signal for the assault. General assent being given to this atrocious proposition, they raised their weapons and looked at their comrade for the appointed notice of attack; a moment of fearful

suspense which their intended victim employed in taking out a pocket match-box, striking a light, and puffing at the tinder, that he might coax up flame enough for his pipe ; while he still preserved a phlegmatic indifference that might have convinced the most incredulous of his being utterly unacquainted with the subject of discussion.

“ Curse the fellow !” cried the conspirator, who was to have given the signal, “ he could never listen to us with so much composure if he understood a single word of the language. ’Twere to throw away a murder to cut his throat, so we may as well turn the Dutch boor adrift, and take better heed in future to examine our room, and look behind the screen before we proceed to business.”

It was precisely at this juncture that Jocelyn and Colonel Rathborn entered the apartment. A peculiar side-glance which Winky Boss cast at the former, intimated to him that he did not wish to be recognized ; and as our hero was

aware of the shrewdness concealed under his clownish exterior, he took the hint, and conducted himself towards him as if he had never seen him before. All the swords were quickly returned to their scabbards on the appearance of a stranger, and the party contented themselves with stating to the Colonel that, from the manner in which the Dutchman had been found concealed in the apartment, they considered him to be a spy, and were about to give him the spy's reward. Jocelyn, who spoke Dutch, volunteered to act as interpreter, and cross-questioning Boss in that language with an appearance of great severity, explained to the company that he had clambered in at the window for liquor, having mistaken the place for a public-house. To dispel every apprehension of future danger or betrayal, he added, that as the Dutchman was anxious to return to his own country, he would take him that evening on board a Danish vessel in the river, which was to sail next day for Rotterdam, and desire the captain,

who was his particular friend, to see him safely transported to Holland. Many thanks were given for this proposition, which seemed to meet the wishes of all parties; Winky Boss was locked up in one of the rooms until it could be put in practice; and the remainder of the party proceeded immediately to dinner.

During the repast, Jocelyn, who constantly saw fresh reason to distrust the desperadoes into whose society he had so unwarily thrown himself, observed the utmost circumspection, discouraged every attempt to give the conversation a political turn, was cautious not to compromise himself by any unguarded expression, and withdrew as soon as possible, under the pretext of conveying the Dutchman to Greenwich, to put him on board the Danish ship before night-fall. It is unnecessary to state, that he had no real intention of this sort, having merely availed himself of the pretext to extricate him from the predicament in which he had found him. Instead of exporting that trusty though

bibulous personage to Holland, he took him into his own service ; and, though honest Boss, partly from drowsiness, and partly from the effect of liquor, had no very distinct recollection of the conversation he had overheard when concealed behind the screen, he retained enough of its general purport to determine Jocelyn never to exchange another with the fanatical and dangerous Colonel Rathborn. Just as he quitted the house at Battersea, intending to walk to Lambeth and take boat, he passed a stranger, who, as soon as he approached, muffled himself up in his cloak and struck into the fields,—a circumstance which he by no means regretted, as he was most anxious to avoid being recognised as a frequenter of that suspicious residence, or an associate with its plotting inmates.

CHAPTER VII.

“ Son of sixteen,
Pluck the lined crutch from thy old limping sire ;
With it beat out his brains ! Pity and fear,
Religion to the gods, peace, justice, truth,
Decline to your confounding contraries ;
And yet confusion live ! ”

SHAKSPEARE.

ENABLED now, by the complete restoration of his health, to bestir himself with activity, Jocelyn lost no time in instituting inquiries respecting Julia, but all his diligence proved unavailing in effecting any discovery of her retreat. Colonel Rathborn's conversation had directed his suspicions to the purlieus of the palace, in the first instance ; and his search in that direction was proportionably keen. Baffled, however, in obtaining the smallest evidence that might justify his apprehensions, he determined to revisit the spot where he had rescued her, to inquire whe-

ther any of the neighbours had heard the orders given to the coachman, or marked in what direction he had driven ; but the whole of Fleet-street was an undistinguishable mass of ruins ; the great fire having spread as far as the Temple ; and none but a few houseless wretches, or vagrants, prowling for plunder, were to be seen among the still-smoking rubbish. A space, above two miles in length, and one in breadth, presented a vast unbroken scene of hideous desolation, where locality could only be rudely traced by the disfigured fragments of some public monument or tower ; while in the midst of the destroyed city, the calcined and blackened skeleton of St. Paul's church reared itself up, attesting, by its gigantic bones and fragments, the stupendous dimensions that it had once exhibited.

Foiled in this project, he betook himself to Alderman Staunton's country-house, where he obtained an interview with that personage, who with infinite perturbation of manner, disclaimed all knowledge of Julia, or of her family, and

once more implored Jocelyn never to renew such inquiries at his house. Respecting Constantia, he could give him no information of a more satisfactory nature, contenting himself with stating that she had retired, for the present, into the country, and had not hitherto furnished him with her address. From the Alderman's he betook himself to South Lambeth, but Mr. Ashmole was either as ignorant or as uncommunicative as his friend; and Jocelyn returned to Whitehall, more and more convinced, from the result of his inquiries, as well as from the concurrent circumstances of her disappearance, that the King had either caused her to be secreted, or must be privy to the place which, whatever might be her motives for that measure, she had voluntarily selected for her concealment.

To Jocelyn a state of suspense had always proved intolerable. Irritated at once by love, jealousy and disappointment, he determined, after many debates with his own mind, to disregard all risks of offence, to avow to the Mo-

narch his passion for Julia, and to implore him to give any information in his power as to the place to which she had been conducted. To select an opportunity for this hazardous inquiry was no easy task, for Lady Castlemaine had caused him to be excluded from the private parties of the King, although his official situation under her Majesty authorised his presence at all the public entertainments of the Court. Against individual audiences, formally requested, Charles had long set his face, for fear of an *assault*, as he termed every remonstrance touching his present conduct, or any appeal to his former promises: and Jocelyn had therefore no alternative but to address him at some of the Court festivals. The first gala that had been given since the Fire was already announced, and as his Majesty had really exerted himself with an unusual energy upon that occasion, by going in his barge to the Tower to order the blowing up of the houses about the Graff, and subsequently on horseback towards the city, as we

have already shown; his courtiers and the ministers of his pleasures determined to show their sense of his merits by enlivening the announced entertainment with an extraordinary festivity. True, it was a strange season to choose when the city had just suffered so heavy a judgment; when, in addition to the numbers of the middling classes who had been suddenly reduced to beggary, it was calculated that above two hundred thousand of the poorer sort were scattered about the suburbs, sleeping under tents, or beneath the open sky, on the point of perishing from hunger and utter destitution; but the Court of Charles the Second was never squeamish when an outrage could be offered to every feeling of commiseration or decency, and the preparations accordingly continued, as if there was a signal triumph to celebrate, instead of so dreadful a calamity to deplore.

To do all honour to the occasion, his Majesty resolved to appear for the first time in the new dress which he meant to introduce at court, and

accordingly, having discarded the doublet and stiff collar, bands and cloak, he invested himself solemnly with his Persian attire, being a long richly embroidered cassock of black cloth, pinked with white silk under it, brought close to the body, with a girdle set with precious stones, and a handsome tunick over the whole. The legs were ruffled with black ribbon, and jewelled buckles at the knee and foot were substituted for garters and shoe-strings, the *tout ensemble* forming a very rich, manly, and becoming garment, which several of the great courtiers had already adopted in compliance with his Majesty's wishes.

The place of entertainment was the Court theatre, where, after some exquisite Italian singing by two eunuchs and a woman, there was a grand masque and ball, in which the King and Queen, with all their distinguished visitants, performed various graceful dances in slow movement; the splendour of their dresses, the sweetness of the music, which consisted entirely of

wind instruments, and the brilliant decorations of the saloon, constituting altogether a scene of rare elegance, combined with unrivalled magnificence. The King having resumed his seat after the dancing, and being at that moment surrounded by only a few of his more intimate associates, Jocelyn considered it a favourable opportunity for his purpose ; and imploring his Majesty's pardon for the liberty, which he attributed to a deep attachment for the lady in question, he humbly stated the information he required.

“ Gadzooks ! that is very true,” cried the King, choosing to misunderstand the object of his solicitation—“ I remember you were to have fifty pieces for preventing a wench from singeing her petticoats ; my treasurer shall pay them to you.”

“ I beg to assure your Majesty,” said Jocelyn, “ that I was not influenced by any hope of reward, nor do I claim it : but, if your Majesty would condescend to inform me where—”

“Tush! Sir,” cried Charles, interrupting him—“must the King be answerable for every pretty Perdita that chooses to jilt her lover?”

“Your Majesty may perhaps have forgotten,” continued Jocelyn, “that the person who accompanied the lady in the carriage received instructions—”

“Enough, Sir, enough!” interposed Charles, with a stern look, and at the same time slightly colouring—“I am not to be questioned as to what orders I may give, nor do I recollect that the Queen’s private Secretary is of his Majesty’s Privy Council.” Turning his back upon Jocelyn after this pointed rebuff, he exclaimed to the Duke of Buckingham—“What say you, George, to this white pinking of the vest? methinks ’twere better without it: and this black ruffling of the leg, as if it were a pigeon’s, shall we discard it for a peach-coloured silk stocking? Pronounce, my *arbiter elegantiarum*, my monarch of the mode, for in foppery and frippery I acknowledge thee to be infallible.”

Buckingham gave his opinion with great gravity upon these important points, discouraging any alterations, commending the dress as at once elegant and manly, although he concluded with an offer of a heavy wager, that his Majesty would be presently tired of the innovation, and would resume his former garb. This bet the King accepted with much confidence, protesting his perfect approbation of the change; but the result proved that Buckingham, who soon claimed the money, knew his capricious humour better than he did himself. As there had been no reason for the adoption of this new fashion, so was there none for its discontinuance. It had been the whim of the moment. To a monarch who needed perpetual excitement, its novelty was sufficient recommendation; when this ceased, its attraction was lost, and the Persian garment followed the fate of the ministers, mistresses, and favourites, of whom he had successively grown tired—it was thrown aside and forgotten.

Jocelyn's indignation at his cavalier dismissal

from the royal presence was inflamed by the conviction that his suspicions were well founded, and that the King was the real author of Julia's abduction, and perfectly well acquainted with her place of concealment. His Majesty had begun with a wilful misconception, he had proceeded with an evasion, he had concluded with a rude and haughty sneer, but he had never denied the fact. Indeed his manner and his equivocation amounted to a full admission in the mind of Jocelyn, who sate apart in a corner of the festive hall, indulging bitter and jealous thoughts, and little participating in the mirth and merriment that surrounded him. The mummary usually enacted at these entertainments was now beginning. Killigrew having dressed himself up as a Quaker, went about denouncing the vices of the Court, and prognosticating the most dreadful calamities in consequence, such as a stoppage to the supply of canary, claret, and muscadel for the men; of Flander's lace, French gloves, Spa-

nish rouge, and Dutch sprunking-glasses for the ladies; together with a general mortality among lap-dogs, monkeys, and parroquets, pimps, pandars and parasites; whereby the recreation and occupation of all ranks and sexes at Whitehall were likely to be annihilated.

“What news, friend, in the City?” inquired the King, as he came up.

“Worse and worse, friend,” replied Killigrew as if he were addressing a stranger. “All going to rack and ruin; commerce declining, confidence destroyed, incapable ministers, a pleasure-loving King, a discontented nation. And yet there is one good, honest, able man in the country, who, if he could be prevailed upon to undertake the management of affairs, and look to every thing himself, would speedily redeem all.”

“’Ods fish!” cried the King, “he must be a spruce and stirring blade, and it would like me well to know the name of such a phoenix.”

“His name,” continued Killigrew, very seriously, “is Charles Stuart, who now spends

his time in kissing and courting, in toying and tippling; but who has talents to perform all that I have said, if he would only devote himself to the undertaking."

"Tush, friend!" replied the King, "what can you expect from one who associates with such a deboshed, idle, and rakehelly fellow as Tom Killigrew?"

"That he should laugh at him when he plays the fool, and endeavour to profit by him when he acts the Mentor," said Killigrew, and immediately moved off to another part of the apartment. Attracted by the bustle and laughter that sounded from a distant part of the saloon, Charles, ever on the alert for amusement, hastened in that direction, and no sooner reached the spot, than several voices at once cried out, "Here is his Majesty! here is his Majesty!" and, opening to the right and left, disclosed to the King's observation the strange figure whom they had been previously encircling. It was a squat and corpulent Dutchwoman, with grey

eyes, sandy mustachios, a coif with laced streamers surmounting her hair, which was pomatumed back from the forehead ; two ponderous gold ear-rings, laying themselves down upon the fat of either shoulder ; and her costume——But we need not describe it a second time, for the figure was Lady Compton, and her attire the identical suit she had worn upon her first presentation to Jocelyn, and which having considerably suffered by the lapse of time, had been selected for her travelling-dress. She had come up to London herself, finding Jocelyn's exertions ineffectual, to use her own personal influence with his Majesty in procuring a settlement of the Brambletye cause. Lord Rochester happened to hear her inquiring for Jocelyn's apartments at Whitehall, and rightly conceiving that so grotesque a figure might afford amusement to the Court, had introduced her into the saloon, informing her that she would be sure to find Mr. Compton among the company, or the King himself if she desired to speak with him.

The latter, indeed, was much more the object of her search than the former, and she no sooner gained sight of him in the manner we have described, than she waddled up to him, curtsy-ing, and exclaiming,—“Hoe is het met zyne majesteit de Koning? Vive le Roi! God bless de King!”

“Who is it? who is it?” was eagerly buzzed about, while the exclamations of “Capital character! inimitably supported! charmingly dressed!” proceeded from the mouths of others, who took for granted that the whole had been got up for the amusement of the King. As Charles himself looked somewhat puzzled from not exactly comprehending the meaning of the mummery, her ladyship proceeded to inform him, in the same mixture of Dutch, French, and English, that she had had the honour of being acquainted with him at Bruges and elsewhere, before the Restoration.

“Prettily acted, i’ faith! and a droll piece of mummery,” cried the King, who did not in the

least recognise his old acquaintance,—“but somewhat enigmatical as to the plot, and no less questionable as to the player, unless it be Tom Wollop, the Falstaff of the Red Bull Theatre.” Not a little indignant at this supposition, her ladyship inquired whether he had so entirely forgotten his friend the quondam widow Weegschaal, whom he had once kissed at Bruges.—“’Ods fish!” exclaimed the King, laughing heartily, and looking at her more attentively in the face,—“sure as fate, it is the very same. Gadzooks! Madam, thou’rt right welcome to our Court; and as I kissed thee in one frolic at Bruges, so will I kiss thee in another at Whitehall.” In pleasant and playful mood his Majesty suited the action to the word, whereat her ladyship simpered and curtsied with an egregious satisfaction, and the spectators indulged their laughter without restraint, complimenting the King upon the acquisition of a new mistress, and even bringing up the Queen to be introduced to her Dutch rival; while banter and

raillery flew from mouth to mouth, as the assemblage addressed themselves to her with a mock homage, all parties seeming to enjoy the scene with the highest possible glee. Her ladyship, however, who had not been at the expense of coming up to London for pastime, proceeded immediately to business, by beseeching the King to interfere with the Lord Chancellor, and procure a decision of the long pending Brambletye cause, a favour which his Majesty promised with as much readiness as he forgot to perform it.

Jocelyn was about to retire from this boisterous and uncongenial mirth, of which he knew not the cause, when he was unfortunately recognised by his step-mother, who waddled up to him, almost before he was aware of her purpose, and exclaimed,—“ Hey, Jocelyn, myn zoon, hoe is het ?” at the same time putting her arm round his neck, and giving him a smack that echoed through the hall. A new peal of laughter followed this hearty though unwelcome em-

brace, and Jocelyn, who was in no fitting mood to be made the butt of the company, was annoyed almost beyond endurance, by the banter of the courtiers, as well as the irony of the King.—“Gramercy! man,” cried Charles, “I give thee joy with all my heart, for this is doubtless the Orinda, the Roxalana, the Dulcinea who was rescued from the fire, and about whom thou wert so unhappy. A delicate creature, i’ faith! and too well calculated to raise a flame, to be allowed to perish in one. Who would not mount a ladder for such a kiss as that?”

With great difficulty did he command himself sufficiently to preserve silence and take no notice of the jeerers, as he partly led and partly pulled her ladyship out of the festive hall, and conducted her to his own apartments, where she stated the object of her visit to London, and congratulated herself on her immediate success in having obtained the King’s promise of interference. Jocelyn well knew the value of such a pledge; but willing to impress upon her mind

that every purpose was now accomplished, he affected to consider it quite conclusive of success, and urged the propriety of her returning as soon as possible, both on account of Sir John's health, and of the great expenses of the metropolis. The latter argument was irresistible, and she professed her readiness to quit London on the following day, if Jocelyn would undertake to procure her a conveyance, which he cheerfully engaged to do. Next morning he accordingly bestirred himself by sunrise, engaged a vehicle, the driver of which made himself responsible for her safe arrival at Brambletye, and had the satisfaction of bidding adieu to her ladyship, who departed in high spirits at her imagined success. Most fortunate was it that he had exerted himself with such promptitude, for Rochester, elated at the amusement she had already afforded, had laid a scheme with Killigrew, Etherege, and some others, for letting her loose upon the Chancellor while he was sitting in his own court; and the whole party were not a little mortified

at her escape, as they calculated, from the animosity she had expressed against him, that she could hardly content herself with any thing less than the demolition of his lordship's wig.

Restless and uneasy, and anxious to avoid the raillery with which he knew he should be still persecuted, he determined to avoid the Court-idlers who were generally lounging about the stone gallery, the matted gallery, or the painted chamber of Whitehall; and he was accordingly going round by the garden of the Palace, when the gate opened, and three figures passed out into the Park, whose apparition almost transfixed him to the spot on which he stood, with utter amazement. It was Julia, gaily and superbly dressed, leaning upon the arm of Lady Castlemaine on one side, and upon that of Mark Walton on the other. She had evidently recognized him, for she blushed deeply, turned aside her head, and walked forward with increased rapidity, leaving Jocelyn in a state of mind that baffles description. Her splendid

attire, the character of the woman upon whose arm she was leaning, the power of passing through the privileged gate, which was understood to be reserved for the King and his mistresses; every thing seemed to attest that she had been secreted about the Palace, as he had always suspected; that she had been unable to resist the attractions of a Court, and the solicitations of a royal lover; that she had followed the infamous example set by so many other women of superior station to herself, and that she was in consequence utterly unworthy of his love.

Irritated at once by indignation and disappointment, he hurried back to his own apartments, locked himself up, and devoted the remainder of the day to solitude and the indulgence of his own melancholy thoughts. Even the intervention of a night's rest, which generally sufficed to allay the irritation of his mind, had not at all dissipated the splenetic feelings of the day before: he no sooner arose than he wan-

dered to the water-side, stepped into a boat, and desired to be rowed to the city, intending once more to survey the ruins, a scene which seemed congenial to the desolate state of his own mind. Instead of executing this purpose he made his way, after landing, to Moorfields, which were then covered with a motley encampment of poor houseless sufferers, huddled together under tents, awnings, and rags of every possible description, and surrounded by such goods and chattles as they had been enabled to snatch from the flames. Amidst the misery and squalor of this gypsey scene, stood the gaily-decorated booth of Polichinello the Italian puppet, whose exhibition, under the magic influence of fashion, drew crowds of visitants from the Court end of the town, to startle the surrounding wretchedness with the echoes of their obstreperous mirth.

Little solicitous of mingling with these heartless triflers, he wandered away from the scene, so wrapt in his own sad thoughts, that he scarcely knew what direction he was taking

until he found himself in the vicinity of the Tower, when he observed, upon a projecting sign, a head of Merlin, over which was written, "Here lives an astrologer—admittance from twelve till four:" and under the painting was a quaint and humorous copy of verses. Pleased with the style and talent of this inscription, he resolved, in the hope of dissipating his uneasy reflections, to desire a sample of the wizard's skill; although he had not the smallest confidence in the power of these necromancers. On mounting the stairs, he was ushered into an ante-room filled with company, waiting their turn for an audience, as the wise man only received one at a time. In due course, Jocelyn was admitted into the *sanctum sanctorum*, where the astrologer sate installed, surrounded with globes, astrolabes, mosaical rods, tables for calculating natiivities, and all the customary apparatus and trumpery of his calling.

"What is your purpose?" said the astrologer, as he entered—"do you wish to learn the art

of framing sigils and lamens, of erecting a scheme, casting nativities, forming horoscopes, or producing vivification by the divining rod?"

"If you know not the purpose with which I came, how can you know aught else concerning me?" said Jocelyn, willing to puzzle the conjuror.

"I can know nothing but by my art," replied the astrologer—"let me consult the stars, and make invocation, and you shall be satisfied of my skill." At these words he performed various fantastical contortions, consulted his books and his instruments, and after exclaiming—"Per virtutem illorum qui invocant nomen tuum, Hermeli, mitte nobis tres angelos,"—he pretended to hold conversation with the three angels, whom the spirit Hermelus had sent him. At the conclusion of his conjuration, he said to Jocelyn, "Your place of nativity is against you: Heaven send, you leave not your fleece in the one like a sheep, nor wear the other about your neck like a felon, for both a Bramble and a tye are con-

cerned in your birth. What's here?—Vulcan in opposition to you? You are a player upon the guitar, I see.”

“ I am,” said Jocelyn. “ Ay,” continued the Astrologer—“ and this is not the sole point in which you resemble Orpheus, for like him you have snatched your Eurydice from the region of fire, only to lose her again. Ha! do you start? have I touched you? You love her, then; and yet you were kissed by another, last night; ay, and in the presence of the King and the whole Court—Proh pudor!”

“ I confess that you amaze me,” said Jocelyn, “ and if your art, or rather your information, which appears to be most quick and accurate, can resolve me where I may find——”

“ Dixi —— abi!” exclaimed the Astrologer——“ I have said:—you may depart!” with which words he pulled down a wooden partition, that rendered him no longer visible; a new applicant was admitted; and Jocelyn had no alternative but to walk down stairs, and quit the

house, which he did in profound astonishment, not only at his being thus recognized by a stranger, but at the inexplicable celerity with which the last night's occurrences at Whitehall had been conveyed to an obscure astrologer, in the neighbourhood of the Tower. The only wonderful feature of the whole transaction was the Protean power of metamorphosis, that enabled Lord Rochester, (for such was the astrologer,) to assume whatever disguise and character he pleased, and deceive his most intimate friends with the same facility as he had now deluded Jocelyn. For some weeks past, his Lordship had been in the habit of posting from Whitehall to the Merlin's Head in the City, where he had succeeded in establishing a prodigious reputation as a cunning man; sometimes availing himself of his celebrity for his own mere amusement; and sometimes abusing the confidence he had inspired by rendering it subservient to the most licentious purposes. His male applicants were generally dismissed with some such swaggering

mandate as that which Jocelyn had received ; but by telling the credulous females who consulted him, that, if they betook themselves to a certain spot, they would encounter a man in a particular dress, who was destined to be their husband, and whose advances they ought not to reject, he was often enabled, by personating the character he had described, to gratify his propensity for intrigue and low amour, not less at the expense of his own honour than that of others.

Making various attempts to solve, by all sorts of conjecture, the apparent mystery that involved this astrologer, and still reflecting most painfully upon Julia's degradation, Jocelyn walked to the Tower-wharf, where he took boat again, and was re-conveyed to Westminster. As he passed one of the courts of law in this quarter, he observed a crowd around the door, and various detached parties whispering together at a little distance ; and, upon inquiring the cause of the assemblage, was informed that one of the regi-

cides was at that moment upon his trial. Though in general averse from all scenes of such solemn and painful interest, a feeling of mingled curiosity and commiseration induced him to join the throng of those who were pressing through the door-way, and to enter the hall. It was completely full; and though the greater part of the crowd consisted of the lower orders, they stood uncovered, observing a profound silence, or only conversing together in anxious whispers, all eyes being directed towards the upper end of the hall, and every countenance wearing an expression of deep awe. Gradually making his way up to the bar, Jocelyn was at length enabled to look over the circular enclosure; and, directing his eyes to the spot set apart for the criminal, a thrill of horror shot to his very heart at beholding his friend, the unfortunate Mr. Strickland.

Recoiling instinctively back from the dread of being recognized by a criminal on trial for his life, and overcome at the same time by a gush of sympathizing anguish, he would have

shrunk away ; but as the proceedings were now about to commence, the crowd behind pressed up to the bar with a vehemence which he had not the power to resist, and he thus remained fixed to the spot he occupied, a compulsory witness of the trial. Finding, however, that although he could observe every thing that passed, he was so placed as not to be distinguishable from within the bar, he became more reconciled to his imprisonment, and ventured to cast another glance at the wretched man, who now stood arraigned by his real name of Valentine Walton, as a murderer, traitor, and regicide. His appearance was little altered since Jocelyn had parted from him at Haelbeck. There was the same wild neglected beard, the same wan and haggard countenance ; but the distrust and terror, that had formerly kept his eyes glancing from one object to another, in perpetual suspicion, were now succeeded by a fixed look of firm desperation. Like some wild animal which, after having used every effort to

escape, stands fiercely at bay when it is finally chaced into the toils, did Valentine Walton gather courage from despair, and look round at the court that was to try him, and at the myriad eyes that were rivetted upon him, with an expression of resolute and even fierce defiance. Beneath him sate his wife, who had insisted upon acting as his counsel and defender, and who upon this awful occasion preserved all that dignified calmness, and majestic self-possession, which Jocelyn had so often admired in her demeanour at Haelbeck.

After enlarging upon the peculiar heinousness and enormous atrocity of the offence, and indulging in a proportionate strain of invective and vituperation against the prisoner, the counsel for the crown drew a frightful picture of the evils entailed upon the country by the late detestable Usurper, which he contrasted with its present happy and glorious state under his most sacred Majesty King Charles the Second, upon whom he pronounced a flaming panegyric; and

concluded his long speech by stating, that as the prisoner at the bar had been so many years absent from England, during which time he had changed his name, had artfully suffered his beard to grow, and had encouraged other alterations of personal appearance for the purpose of disguising himself as much as possible, there might have been considerable difficulty in proving his identity, had they not been fortunately provided with a witness who had known him under every change of circumstances, and who could not only swear to his person, but to his guilt, although that was already sufficiently notorious. This witness, he declared, was the only one he should call, and it was a satisfaction to be able to state that he was not only a gentleman of unimpeachable veracity, but one who, in this instance, had evinced a more than Roman virtue by sacrificing every feeling of regard and kindred upon the double altar of patriotism to his country and loyalty to his King.

During the delivery of this speech, the pri-

soner had preserved a look of unaltered firmness, which only varied towards its conclusion, into an expression of slight wonder. But no sooner had the crier pronounced aloud the name of Mark Walton, as the man whose evidence was to condemn him ; no sooner had he seen his nephew actually standing up in the witness-box, than he leaped suddenly backwards, as if recoiling from a demon, and clasping his hands together above his head, while his whole face was distorted by ungovernable passion, he shouted out in a terrible voice,—“ Villain ! monster ! parricide ! man !!—may the blood and the curse of a murdered uncle, of one who adopted, fed, and nurtured thee in his bosom, fall upon thy head, and wither up thy heart ! May thy hopes be blasted in this world ! and in the next, may fires unquenchable——”

Overcome by the paroxysm of his wrath, he could not complete the malediction. His usually wan complexion was suffused and sanguine, the veins swelled, perspiration trickled from his

forehead, his blood-shot eyes seemed starting from their sockets, the horrible grinding of his teeth became audible as he gnashed them together, his body writhed as if the mighty convulsion within would rend it asunder, and then every limb becoming suddenly rigid, he fell backwards in a fit.—By order of the judge, he was removed from the court, his wife accompanying him and promptly performing such melancholy offices as the occasion required, by loosening his bands, applying volatile salts to his nose, and giving proper directions to the bewildered officers of the court.

Apparently unaffected by the catastrophe he had occasioned, Mark Walton gave the most conclusive testimony of his uncle's guilt and identity, winding up his testimony by something like an apology, in which he attempted to disguise his hideous ingratitude and treacherous violation of every claim of consanguinity, under the flimsy veil of fealty to the King and duty to the public.

At the conclusion of his deposition, Mrs. Walton returned into the court, her countenance a little saddened, but still collected and undismayed.

“Who is of counsel for the prisoner?” inquired the Judge.

“I am, my Lord,” replied Mrs. Walton. “I was his counsellor and adviser in the offence; I will be his defender in his trial; I would willingly be a sharer in his punishment. I have but a few words to say, and I hope therefore to stand excused if I enter into a short detail of our private history. I am the sister of the late sovereign of these realms, his Highness the Lord Protector of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the dominions and territories thereunto belonging.”

“Woman! woman!” cried the Judge, angrily, “we know of no such person here. If you speak of the late execrable usurper, Oliver Cromwell, call him by his name.”

“My Lord, my Lord,” calmly resumed Mrs.

Walton—" names are of little import. You may, with a worse than cannibal rage, dig up and insult the remains of that man before whom, when alive, you cowered in the very dust. You may nail up that head upon Westminster Hall, whose bold and bright intellect exalted England to the very pinnacle of renown, and controlled the destinies of Europe. But you cannot tear him down from the illustrious niche he occupies in the temple of history ; you cannot untomb him from the imperishable monument he has built for himself by his own great and valorous exploits. My husband was entrusted by him with an almost unlimited power and authority ; how he exercised it let those attest who were subject to his sway. But though we were connected with the Protector by every tie of blood and interest, we were no parties to his usurpation ; we had not assisted him to depose an hereditary tyrant, in order to set up a despot whose title was his sword. Deeming that this noble nation was never meant to be the patri-

mony of a family, but was fully capable of governing itself, we were the staunch advocates of a republic; and no sooner had we ascertained the real views of the Protector than we severed ourselves from his communion, gave up all our appointments, abandoned power and sway, and retired into the obscurity of private life."

"You should have done that before the murder of the King," observed the judge; "you would then have had public opinion with you."

"Public opinion!" exclaimed Mrs. Walton, with a slight expression of contempt. "The wind is not more uncertain. In our last place of concealment, my unfortunate husband gazed every day upon a picture representing the murder of William the First of Holland, who was slain in the most cowardly manner by a sordid and bigoted assassin. This man did the Spanish nation, which had instigated him to the deed, celebrate and canonize as a martyr, while his family was ennobled and enriched. Charles the First was tried by a public, legal,

solemn tribunal, and the seventy or eighty judges who condemned him, are execrated, hunted down, and exterminated like wild beasts.—Such is public opinion.* This fleeting breath may perhaps be in favour of the restored Government,—yet what has it effected? This great and godly nation, so lately the terror of its enemies, rendered contemptible and effeminate by profane debaucheries, and given over to the dominion of harlots, profligates, and drunkards, is become the scorn of Europe, is invaded and insulted by the weakest of its foes, its ships burnt in their harbours, its people put to flight and shame, its very capital threatened; while an outraged Deity, in manifestation of his wrath, has devastated the land with pestilence, and destroyed its metropolis by fire.”

“ Hold thy audacious tongue !” cried the

* All the parties implicated in the King’s trial, chose to overlook the defective constitution of the court, which rendered their sentence as illegal and arbitrary, as any of the violent acts with which the King was charged.

judge—"and rail not thus against the government of his most sacred Majesty. All that you have said is quite irrelevant. Do you deny the prisoner's guilt?"

"Yes, my lord; but I admit the act of which he stands arraigned, for Valentine Walton never meant to quit the earth with a lie in his mouth."

"Woman! how dare you trifle with the court?" cried the judge. "As you admit the act I will proceed to charge the jury, and you may bring forward the prisoner that he may hear his sentence."

"My lord," said Mrs. Walton, in a more solemn tone of voice—"it is out of my power to produce him; he has escaped!"

"How!—what mean you?—Escaped!" exclaimed his lordship, starting up in great agitation. "Mr. Sheriff and officers of the court, look to it at your cost! Lieges! I charge you all in the King's name to be aiding and abetting! Send to the Horse Guards for assistance! Raise a hue and cry."

“Compose yourself, my lord,” resumed Mrs. Walton—“he is beyond your jurisdiction. He has removed his cause into a higher court, whence not all the kings of the earth, nor all their guards, nor all the armies in the world, can summon him to appear before you. He is dead !”

“Dead !” exclaimed the judge, with a look of incredulity—“this is some plot or device to defraud the scaffold of its due. Look to him, officers, instantly, and let me hear the truth.”

Two or three officials of the court having now confirmed that the prisoner was dead, his lordship exclaimed in a loud and angry voice—

“Insolent and unfeeling woman ! how have you dared to waste the time of the court,—how have you had the heart to plead his cause when you knew your husband to be a corpse ?”

“Because I wished to vindicate his memory—because I rejoiced that he had escaped from his miseries—that his mind was severed from the tenement of clay by which it was broken and

shattered—that he had avoided a public ignominious death. That is no decease which promises to give me back the husband of my youth; which, renewing the bold, clear intellect, the pure, benevolent heart, that first won my love, will transfer them to the sky to await our second bridal.”

“Away with her!” cried the judge—“she raves. She is spotted all over with treason—away with her!” With these words he broke up the court, apparently in great dudgeon, at having been disappointed of his victim; and Jocelyn, as well as the other spectators, slowly retired out of the hall, many of the latter recalling to one another such passages as they recollected of Walton’s early history.*

* Valentine Walton, “the Bashaw of the Isle of Ely,” as Heath calls him in his Chronicle, was made governor of King’s Lynn and Croyland, with all the level of Ely. Walker, in his History of the Independents, says, that Boston, King’s Lynn, &c. were able to support forty thousand men, besides the island’s native inhabitants, and that it might be laid under water at pleasure. He adds

—"there are but three paths to enter it, over three bridges, upon which they have or may build forts for their defence, and may from thence invade the adjacent country at pleasure, being themselves free from incursions; or they may, if they list, break down the said bridges. These places, already strong by nature, they daily fortify by art; for which purpose great sums of money have been sent to him, (Walton) and much arms, powder, ammunition and ordnance from Windsor Castle. Here, when all other helps fail, the godly mean to take sanctuary: this shall be their retreat from whence they draw the whole kingdom to parley upon articles of treaty, and enforce their peace from them at last.—These are the stratagems of the godly."

CHAPTER VIII.

“ Cases and deprecations are in vain :
The sun will shine and all things have their course,
When we, the curse and burden of the earth,
Shall be absorb'd, and mingled with its dust ;
Our guilt and desolation must be told
From age to age, to teach desponding mortals,
How far beyond the reach of human thought,
Heav'n, when incens'd, can punish.”

LÍLLO'S “ *Fatal Curiosity.*”

Our hero's feelings at the scene we have just been describing, would have been of a still more painful and harrowing nature, had he been aware that he was in some degree instrumental, however unintentionally, in procuring the arrest and trial of the unfortunate prisoner. It will be recollected that at the time Mark Walton had borrowed money from him, he had declared his

intention of appropriating it to a purpose in which, if successful, his fortune would be made for life. This nefarious project was no other than the discovery and capture of his uncle, by whom, as had truly been stated at the trial, he had been originally adopted, fed, and nurtured ; although the uncle's compulsory flight from England at the period of the Restoration, had of course broken off the intimacy, and severed all communication between them. By his acquaintance with the friends and agents whom his uncle still retained, and who were in the habit of occasional intercourse with him through the medium of the Burgomaster of Rotterdam, Mark had contrived to possess himself of his place of concealment, a secret of which the heartless ingrate immediately saw the value, and as instantly resolved to turn it to account. Dissolute in his habits and involved in debt, he saw within his grasp the means of present relief and future gratification ; others, by a similar exercise of treachery towards the late King's Judges, had made their fortunes,

and were well received at Court ; and he could gloss over the atrocity, as they had done, by giving it the name of loyalty and public duty.

Reconciled to his projected enormity by these arguments, nothing remained but to provide the means of its execution. His pecuniary distresses offered an insurmountable obstacle, until the loan from Jocelyn removed this difficulty, when nothing remained but to make the best bargain in his power with Government, as to the remuneration he was to receive by way of blood-money ; and to get instructions from some competent person, as to the most eligible method of proceeding. For this purpose he applied to Sir George Downing,* who from his long resi-

* This fellow, whom Wood calls a sider in all times and changes, had been originally a chaplain to Colonel Okey's regiment, by whose recommendation Cromwell sent him as his Agent to Holland, where he distinguished himself by his virulence and insolence towards the King, and procured his expulsion from the territory of the States. Towards the close of the Commonwealth he obtained an interview with the Marquess of Ormond, when he offered himself as a secret spy to the King, was

dence as Envoy at the States, was not only well qualified to afford the requisite information, but had actually advanced and enriched himself by procuring the seizure of three of the King's Judges abroad, under circumstances of treachery scarcely less atrocious than those which he was himself meditating. From this most worthy coadjutor he not only received full in-

accepted as such, and was knighted by his Majesty before he embarked at Schieveling. In 1662, Miles Corbet, John Barkstead, and his former patron, Colonel Okey, who had taken refuge at Hanau, in Germany, were, by Downing's perfidy, decoyed to Delft, a letter being sent to them stating the arrival of their wives in that city. Here they were instantly seized by Downing, who hurried them on board the Blackmore frigate, which conveyed them to England, and they were executed on the 19th April following.

From Hume's language one might almost imagine that an act of lenity had been extended to Colonel Okey. After stating that he prayed for the King at the place of execution, and noticing that "in all his conduct he appeared to be a man of humanity and honour," he adds—"In consideration of his good character and of his dutiful behaviour—his body was given to his friends to be buried!"

structions how to act, but was introduced by him to one of the King's ministers, from whom he obtained a promise, that if he succeeded in his project, a portion of his uncle's confiscated estates should be restored to him.

Thus provided with the means of executing his perfidious design, and excited by the expectation of the reward, he set out for a port of the Spanish Netherlands, in a small government cutter, the captain of which was instructed to hover upon the coast, for the purpose of seconding his enterprize. Two or three anonymous letters, and some suspicious demonstrations about the castle of Haelbeck, operated so effectually upon the watchful terrors of its inmate, that he was induced once more to change his quarters, and return into Holland, which country, being then at war with England, seemed to offer a more secure asylum. This was precisely what his unprincipled nephew intended. The road along which his victim must necessarily pass, approached to within a small dis-

tance of the sea ; the hour of his departure was ascertained ; a party of sailors were placed in ambush, and the unfortunate exile and his family, falling into the trap laid for them, were surprised, seized, and conveyed on board the cutter, which carried them up the Thames, when Walton was committed close prisoner to the Tower, and the females were set at liberty.

The nephew, who had taken good care not to appear in this transaction, found his way back to England by a different conveyance, intending, by a refinement in treachery, to insinuate himself into his uncle's confidence, and learn his plan of defence, in order that he might defeat it. Set ashore in London under circumstances that rendered them objects of real or affected detestation, Mrs. Walton and her daughter, being denied all immediate access to the prisoner, betook themselves in the first instance to Alderman Staunton, whose connections with the Government rendered him peculiarly sensitive as to any intercourse with the family of a

regicide. In great trepidation of spirit, he requested his friend Mr. Ashmole to receive the fugitives at Turret House, a proposition which that gentleman felt himself obliged to decline from the same motives; and hence, the agitation and the eagerness to disclaim all knowledge of the parties, which Jocelyn had remarked, whenever he made inquiries at these respective residences. It seemed as if the wanderers, pursued by the terror that attached to Walton's name, were to find no resting-place for their feet, no hand to welcome, no house to shelter them. But Constantia had no sooner learnt their arrival, than disdaining all these cowardly and selfish apprehensions, she flew with open arms to her friends, pressed them to her affectionate heart, desired them to share her fate and fortune, and proposed, that to avoid being indebted to any one, they should all three live together, an arrangement which, since the death of her father, would be peculiarly gratifying to herself.

This generous offer being accepted with gratitude, she immediately engaged for their reception, the house withinside Temple-Bar, from which she was fortunately absent in company with Mrs. Walton, at the moment when Julia had been rescued by Jocelyn, in the manner already described.

Mark Walton had no sooner arrived in London, than he hastened to call upon his relatives, affecting to take the deepest interest in the fate of his uncle, reprobating the treachery by which he had been entrapped, and offering his services towards assisting in the defence, or in whatever other way they could be rendered available. At a moment when they seemed to be shunned and deserted by all the world except Constantia, such conduct, especially in one who held a situation about the Court, bore an appearance of generosity and disinterestedness, which Julia failed not to recognize with the fervour that belonged to her character, and which the object of it was willing to attribute

to motives of a tenderer and more personal nature. He had never seen her since they had played together as children, and was no less astonished at the improvement a few years had effected, than smitten by the charms which he now contemplated in the full perfection of her womanhood. The visits, which had been begun by policy, were now continued from an attachment to his fair cousin, that gathered strength every day ; and he looked forward to the possibility of reconciling all parties to their marriage, by making it appear that he was a compulsory witness in the prosecution of his uncle, and by offering to settle upon Julia the family estate which was to be restored to him by the Government. Such an expectation was not less absurd than sordid ; but knaves are peculiarly liable to make the most foolish miscalculations, because they judge of others by themselves, and thus lay the foundation of their plans upon a wrong estimate of human nature.

For some time, however, he succeeded in in-

gratiating himself with Julia. Being allowed to communicate with the prisoner by letter, Walton's family learnt his determination to plead guilty, a resolution which they combated most strenuously, and which his nephew also condemned as pusillanimous self-abandonment. He even accompanied Julia to a celebrated Counsellor at Westminster, to solicit him to undertake the defence; and it was upon this occasion that Jocelyn had seen them arm-in-arm together as he came out of the Banqueting Room, where the King had been touching for the evil, although his transient glance of the man's figure did not allow him to recognize Mark Walton.

In one instance, the growing attachment of the latter enabled him to afford Julia an essential service. On the day that she had been rescued from the fire, and sent away in a carriage by the King's orders, he happened to recognize her as the vehicle drove up to the back-door of Baptist May's apartments. The latter was the

keeper of the Privy Purse, and the chosen minister of his Majesty's private amours; a circumstance which immediately suggested to Mark Walton the motives with which his cousin was conveyed to this disreputable haunt. Too abject a courtier to interfere openly with any proceeding in which the royal pleasures were concerned, he contented himself for the present with noticing the person who had accompanied her, who proved to be one of the King's minions, with whom he had a slight acquaintance. By throwing himself in this man's way, and alluding to the affair in which he had been engaged in a tone of raillery and badinage, he extracted from him all the particulars; and no sooner learnt that Julia was in a state of insensibility at the time of the rescue, than his crafty and scheming brain suggested to him the possibility of his passing himself off as her deliverer. If, in addition to this claim upon her gratitude, he could release her from her present dangerous predicament, he flattered himself that such im-

portant services would go far to counteract any prejudice she might imbibe against him for his conduct towards his uncle, even should he fail to make it appear that he was driven to act in that affair by an inevitable necessity.

The great difficulty was to extricate her from Bab May's clutches without compromising himself or appearing in the transaction; for he was sensible that if he made the King his enemy, the confiscated estate would, in all probability, never reach his hands, and he should have then incurred the odium of his uncle's sacrifice without reaping a single advantage. After some days' plotting and planning, he presented himself to Lady Castlemaine, declared his passion for Julia, stated the circumstances under which the King had ordered her to be secreted in Bab May's apartments, enlarged upon her dazzling charms and great powers of fascination, in order to provoke her ladyship's jealousy, and concluded by imploring her assistance in effecting the liberation of his mistress.

This her ladyship, always afraid of new rivals, readily undertook to do; adding that there was no time to be lost, as the King, who had been confined to his room from a severe cold occasioned by his exertions at the time of the Fire, meant to go out that day for the first time, and she had heard him, not two hours before, give orders that May should be in attendance in the afternoon.

Between the Keeper of the King's privy purse and her ladyship, there had long existed a league offensive and defensive, cemented by a sense of mutual advantage from its continuance, and a fear of the consequences they might respectively entail upon each other by a rupture.

There was therefore little difficulty in the present negociation. Her ladyship undertook to bear him harmless; and May, who knew that it was much safer to offend the King than the King's mistress, willingly introduced her to his prisoner, and suffered Mark Walton to accompany her into the apartment. The clothes that

Julia wore at the time of the fire had been so soiled by dirt and smoke, as to be utterly unfit for use, and she had therefore no alternative but to put on those which were supplied to her by a tire-woman sent for that purpose, although from their style of fashion and splendour they were suited neither to her taste nor her situation. Lady Castlemaine stated the object of her visit, attributed her interference to the solicitations of Mark Walton, eulogised his courage in thus exposing himself to the King's wrath, and perhaps to utter ruin, to effect her liberation, and concluded by urging her to put on her hood and make her escape immediately, as the King would be likely to visit that apartment in the course of the afternoon. Julia needed no second solicitation; she speedily prepared for flight in company with her deliverers; her ladyship's key let them out of the private door of Whitehall Garden into the Park; and such were the circumstances under which their appearance together had excited

such an utter and agonizing astonishment in the mind of Jocelyn.

Julia took leave of Lady Castlemaine with the most fervent thanks for her timely interference, and, escorted by her cousin, proceeded to Turret House, where she hoped to meet her friend Constantia, or at least to gather tidings of her and of her mother; an expectation in which she was not disappointed. Although Mr. Ashmole, who held several places under Government, was still apprehensive of harbouring Mrs. Walton beneath his own roof, he had procured lodgings for her and for Constantia, who was determined to share her fate, in the immediate vicinity. Both were now summoned to Turret House, and the joy of this meeting, after the intense anxiety they had all been suffering since Julia's mysterious disappearance, must be left to the imagination of the reader. Julia presented her cousin to the assemblage as her double deliverer; first, from the balcony, in which she must have inevitably perished, but for his prompt and cou-

rageous aid; and secondly, with not inferior peril to himself, from the power and the sinister designs of the King. It will be recollected that this was the day before the trial, when nothing was yet known of his treason to his uncle, and when there was consequently no reason to check those overflowings of gratitude and admiration with which the whole assemblage, and particularly Julia, acknowledged his inestimable services.

As it was deemed probable that the King might institute some inquiry as to her escape, and even endeavour to recover possession of her, it was suggested that she ought to be immediately removed to a considerable distance from London; a proposition which Mr. Ashmole not only warmly seconded, but mentioned a sequestered residence belonging to a friend of his own, and situated in a beautiful part of Ashdown Forest, in Sussex, which was at that moment to be let, and which would be admirably adapted to their present object of privacy and seclusion.

This retreat Constantia instantly undertook to engage; it was agreed that they should remove to it immediately after the trial; and Mark Walton, having inquired the exact situation of the house, withdrew to prosecute his own nefarious plans.

From the unfortunate state of his mind, as well as from the dreadful fate that would have awaited him had he survived, the friends of Mr Walton were rather disposed to consider his death as a happy deliverance than an event to be deeply deplored. All the suffering and ignominy of a public execution had been avoided, and his widow even viewed the occurrence as a special interference of Providence. Accompanied by Julia and Constantia, she retired in a few days to the sylvan asylum that had been provided for them, where in the tranquillity of the spot, the beauty of the scenery, and in the undisturbed enjoyment of all the solaces to be derived from friendship and religion, they endeavoured to forget the privations they had

suffered, and the agitating events in which they had all been participators. This soothing and peaceful calm was not, however, destined to be of long continuance. Mark Walton had no sooner got a portion of his uncle's estate restored to him, a circumstance on which he mainly relied for success in his overtures to Julia, whom he looked upon as impoverished and even penniless, than he hastened down to Pippingford Lodge, (for such was the name of their retreat,) and demanded an interview. Mrs. Walton sternly refused to see him, a resolution in which she ever remained inexorable: but Julia, who still imagined herself to be under incalculable obligations to him, did not feel herself warranted in dismissing him unheard. With all the crafty subtlety that cunning could suggest, or falsehood invent, did he endeavour to gloss over his infamy, protesting that he was a most unwilling witness against his uncle, and could not without perjury have acted otherwise than as he did. He then vaunted the high

favour in which he stood with the King and Government; in proof of which he exhibited the royal grant, to him and his heirs, of his uncle's estate; and concluded with a formal avowal of his passion, and demand of her hand, urging her to observe, that he came once more as her deliverer, to rescue her from poverty, obscurity and reproach, and restore her, as well as his aunt, to wealth, society, respect, and a residence upon the lost estate of their ancestors.

Equally unconvinced by his arguments and untempted by his offers, Julia assured him that she could only repeat the expression of the deep gratitude which, for herself personally, she should ever feel bound to entertain towards him; declaring at the same time, in the most explicit and unequivocal terms, that he need never look for the smallest success in his suit, as her affections were not in her own power to bestow; and she therefore urged him to abandon a pursuit which was equally hopeless to him.

and painful to herself and her mother, who had declared her unalterable resolution of never seeing him. With this formal rejection she curtsied and left the room, in spite of all his efforts to detain her, hoping that by the decided manner of his dismissal, he would be discouraged from persecuting her any further. This, however, was far from being the case: in spite of all interdicts he again repeatedly made his way into the house, renewing his solicitations with increased vehemence; and after the doors had been shut against him, he not only accosted Julia and Constantia in an angry and alarming manner, whenever they walked beyond their own premises; but beleaguering the garden, which was only separated from the forest by a hedge, he listened to their conversation, and again urged his overtures with violence of behaviour that almost amounted to menace. Week after week, and month after month, passed away with little variation in this succession of annoyance, except that their tormentor aggravated it by

insolently declaring he would never abandon his pursuit; until at length the inmates of Pippingford Lodge, feeling the unprotected nature of their situation, knowing the character of their assailant, and dreading the desperate expedients to which he might ultimately have recourse, began to consider the propriety of abandoning their abode, and seeking a new place of refuge.

On the discovery of Valentine Walton's real history, Jocelyn had congratulated himself that he had resisted the first impulse of his passion, and had not compromised himself with the daughter of a regicide, a connection which would have been considered little less than treasonable in any one holding a situation about the Court. The disparaging conclusions he had drawn from having seen Julia arm-in-arm with Lady Castlemaine and her cousin, confirmed this feeling. He held himself happy in having escaped from a fascinating but artful woman, whose family was disreputable, and whose character was licentious. He considered that his passion was com-

pletely eradicated from his heart, and complimented himself upon the prudence and resolution with which he had effected that difficult measure. But these were transient impressions; there was a void in his bosom which no other object could supply; his thoughts reverted to the first mistress of his affections, sometimes with anger, sometimes with pity, but always with regret; and notwithstanding his experience of its past inefficacy, he again plunged into dissipation in the vain hope of abstracting his thoughts from the painful subject upon which they were perpetually brooding.

Such had been his course of life for some time, when upon returning home one morning, he was told that there was a lady in his apartment, who had been waiting for him two or three hours. Surprised at this intelligence he entered the chamber, when a female figure arose from the chair in which she had been sitting, threw back her hood, and discovered to Jocelyn the large black eyes which he had

never forgotten since they first arrested his attention in the grand tournament at Paris. "Good heavens!" he ejaculated—"Constantia Beverning here!"

"Yes, sir," replied Constantia—"I am once more a despiser of conventional forms and observances, for which I have no other excuse than that I slight them, as I did before, in order to render services to my fellow-creatures. I have made a discovery which, I trust, will secure the happiness of the two people I most esteem upon earth, if it be made known to them, but of which, if the established punctilios of social intercourse are to be observed, they may for ever remain ignorant. Before I divulge it, I have one question to ask. You formerly confessed to me that your whole heart was devoted to Julia. Does that attachment continue?"

"Alas!" replied Jocelyn, "I wish I could answer in the negative. I wish I could tear from my bosom the memory of a woman whom I still love, though she has proved herself unworthy of my affections."

“Unworthy!” exclaimed Constantia, with an indignant surprise: “are you mad? she is every thing that is pure, noble, and unsullied.”—Jocelyn related the circumstance from which he drew his inference against her honour. “For shame, sir! for shame!” resumed Constantia; “your suspicion of such a woman is an insult which I could resent, but that I pity the feelings with which you must learn the injustice you have done her.” In a few words she explained the mode of Julia’s escape, and accounted most satisfactorily for her appearing in the company of Lady Castlemaine.

“Fool! idiot! that I have been!” ejaculated Jocelyn, groaning with distress of mind. “Oh that every other obstacle were removed with equal ease! Oh that she were purified from family taint and opprobrium, as effectually as she is from all personal reproach! Oh that she were the daughter of any one but Valentine Walton, the Regicide!”

“She is *not* the daughter of Valentine Wal-

ton !” said Constantia solemnly ; “ and this is the discovery which I am come to communicate to you.”

“ Gracious Heaven !” exclaimed Jocelyn — “ who then is her father ?”

“ That remains to be yet learned,” replied Constantia.—“ I have performed my mission. Mrs. Walton’s own mouth must furnish what further particulars you desire to know. Hasten therefore to Pippingford Lodge, if you wish to secure Julia and your own happiness ; hasten thither, if you wish to protect her from the insults of your rival.”

“ Insults ! Rival !” cried Jocelyn fiercely : “ who is the man that dares ——” He stopped, for Constantia had quitted the apartment, only repeating the word, “ hasten !” as she closed the door ; an injunction which was quickly obeyed, for Jocelyn having rapidly equipped himself for travelling, threw himself upon his horse, and was galloping out of London, in a short time after she had disappeared.

Upon his arrival at the Lodge, a spot with which he was well acquainted, from its being in the immediate vicinity of Brambletye House, he stated to Mrs. Walton, whom he found alone, the particulars of his interview with Constantia, and the object of his visit, imploring her to confirm, if true, the information he had received respecting Julia's birth.

"It is a secret," she replied, "which I had intended to carry with me to the grave, for I would not unnecessarily have disturbed Julia's peace of mind by divulging it, unless by so doing I could have restored her to her real parents, whoever they may be. From the information of our dear Constantia, however, I have learnt that her happiness may be promoted by its being made known to the world, that she is not the daughter of Valentine Walton, and I therefore reveal the truth from the same motives that have hitherto led me to suppress it. At the commencement of the civil wars we resided at East Grinstead, not many miles from this

spot, happy in every thing but the want of offspring,—a blessing for which we often addressed our prayers to Heaven, but without effect. We were about to embark for the Barbadoes, where my husband possessed an estate, when on the eve of our departure we were alarmed by a cry from one of the chambers, on entering which, we found a female infant, richly dressed, lying on the bed. Considering that from the disturbed state of the country, some child of distinction, suddenly left in orphan destitution, might have been committed to our adoption, or rather, that a benignant Providence had guided it to our threshold in answer to our supplications, we thankfully received the precious gift, christened her Julia from the name of the month in which she was found, and embarked on the following morning for the West Indies. At our return we went to reside in Cambridgeshire, where a conviction of the inutility of all inquiry, and a fear of losing the chief solace of our life, prevented our giving any

publicity to the affair. My dear Julia will ever be the daughter of my heart ; and she herself, I trust, has never had reason to complain of the mother who adopted her, although the misfortunes of our latter days have, as you well know, condemned her to a life of melancholy and uncongenial seclusion."

Being informed in answer to his inquiries, that Julia was in an arbour at the bottom of the garden, Jocelyn hastened to declare the deep and indelible attachment that he had ever felt for her since the first moment of their acquaintance, although various mysteries and misconceptions had hitherto prevented the offer of the hand and heart, which he now implored her to accept.—“The mystery that involves my birth,” replied Julia, “still remains to be solved, though I am afraid there is but little chance of discovering my real parents. If, however, you will accept a poor foundling, who has nothing but her heart to offer you, she will endeavour to atone for the want of other recommendations by the constancy and fervour of her affection.”

An hour, a lover's hour, spent in mutual vows and sweet anticipations of the future, passed away with the rapidity of lightning, and Jocelyn was expressing his hopes that the great suit pending, by which his father's estates had been so long withheld from him, would now quickly be decided, and that they would soon be enabled to restore the splendours of Brambletye House, the seat of their ancestors, when a sepulchral voice, sounding from behind the arbour, ejaculated—"Anathema ! maranatha ! a curse be upon its sacrilegious walls, and never again may they be covered with a roof ! Amen !"

Julia uttered an exclamation of terror, and even Jocelyn was startled : but almost immediately vaulting over the hedge, he beheld a dark object moving rapidly away towards the forest. He pursued it, but fleet as he was of foot, the gathering gloom of evening, and the deep shades of the forest, enabled it to escape, and as he did not wish to leave Julia, he gave over his search, and returned to her, exclaiming—"There is a

mystery attaches to our family, as well as to your's; for this strange being, whom Sir John has christened the Black Ghost, has for several years continued to haunt Brambletye and its neighbourhood, uttering malisons against the house and the whole race of the Comptons; a circumstance which we can no otherwise explain than by supposing her to be some wandering lunatic, although even this supposition will not account for her inexplicable power of eluding apprehension."

The tender conversation, so suddenly interrupted by this incident, was resumed, and in the course of the explanations that ensued relative to her escape from the fire, Julia saw fresh reason to despise her cousin for his contemptible falsehoods, and was not at all sorry at being enabled to transfer to her lover the gratitude that was due to him for her rescue. So indignant was Jocelyn at the recital of the insolent persecutions they had all suffered from Mark Walton, that even the presence and the entreaties of Julia could hardly restrain his

wrath, or prevent the expression of his resolution to inflict personal chastisement upon the caitiff, wherever he should encounter him.

That wary and watchful personage, rendered suspicious by a knowledge of his own artifices, and now in intimate connection with the Government spies, had planted myrmidons about Pippingford Lodge, by whom he was presently apprized of Jocelyn's arrival; and well knowing that his own exposure would ensue, even if he escaped a personal skirmish with his rival, of which he was by no means desirous, he took immediate measures for placing him in a situation that should effectually debar him from prosecuting either his love or his revenge, and which might ultimately, as he hoped, entail destruction upon his head. During the time that he had been tormenting Julia and her friends by his hateful solicitations, he was in the habit of residing, or at least of sleeping, in a wood-cutter's cottage, in the recesses of the forest, not far from Pippingford Lodge. Thither did he

now betake himself, to superintend the machinations he had been devising for Jocelyn's ruin ; stealing to his obscure hiding-place in the dusk of the evening, as he was, at this juncture, not less apprehensive of his rival's eye than of his arm. He was passing the last of the thickets in which the cottage was embowered, when a deep solemn voice exclaimed, "Stop, Mark Walton ! stop !" and at the same moment a black figure, in a female garb, started from the brake.— "Stand aloof ! keep back !" cried Walton, jumping on one side, and presenting a pistol ; "I am armed, and if you move a step further you are dead !"

"Put up your weapon," cried the figure, "I am your friend ; I bring you tidings that may give you fortune, distinction, and Julia."

"Julia !" cried Walton, in amazement, "what can you know of her ?"

"I know that without my aid she is lost to you for ever ; I know that your rival, Jocelyn Compton, is at this moment at Pippingford.

Lodge ; I know that she has received him as her lover ; I know that I have a secret to divulge which will render you the master of her fate, and thereby, in all probability, of her person, and the fortune to which she is entitled : and this secret I am now ready to reveal, if you agree to certain conditions."

"Name them," said Walton.

"Not here : there is an oath to swear, and a deed to do, but not here. If you are prepared to listen to the secret, and to execute its conditions, follow me !"

"Lead on," said Walton—"I am ready." She walked forward, threading the thickest mazes and most unfrequented recesses of the pathless forest, muttering malisons and Scriptural quotations to herself, while Walton followed with his pistol in his hand, until they emerged at the back of Brambletye House, when she clambered over the dismantled wall, and having made her way into the midst of the vaults and ruins of the building, she turned to her

companion, ejaculating, " 'This is the spot ! here must the secret be divulged : if you agree to the conditions, listen ! If I perform what I have said with respect to Julia, will you swear, even should she become your wife, and prove to be a descendant of the family by whom this house was built, even should she wish to appropriate her own fortune to the purpose—will you swear that the walls and the roof of this accursed mansion shall never be restored, nor any other founded upon its site ?"

" I swear it," said Walton—" what more ?"

" Will you confirm the sincerity of your vow, and assist me in the destruction of what yet remains of this heaven-abandoned pile, by setting fire with your own hand, to yonder heap that I have prepared for the purpose of consuming it. When the Earl of Derby was executed at Bolton Cross, after escaping from the castle of Chester, it was considered a judgment upon him that his scaffold should be built with the timber of his own house at Latham. How much

more righteous is the judgment which condemns Brambletye to be burnt, even with the wood which I have gathered from its own sacrilegious chambers !” She pointed to a collection of faggots and timber piled up as if for a great bonfire ; and Walton, who considered that little damage could ensue to the bare dismantled walls, beyond that of discolouring them with smoke, readily consented to the proposition. “ Sit down,” said his companion, “ and attend to me without interruption ; for my own short history is so interwoven with that of Julia, and the doom of Brambletye House, that you must listen to its recital. If you have ever been at Ashurst, in this neighbourhood, or have perused its records, you must doubtless have heard of the blessed and holy Rood, or image of the Mother of God, which it possessed in the days of the true religion, and which was endowed with such miraculous powers, that the nails of its hands, and the hair of its head grew every year, as many thousand pilgrims who then annually came to

visit it, could attest. When that misbelieving arch-apostate, King Henry the Eighth, issued an order for destroying all these sacred images, my ancestors, to prevent the sacrilege with which it was threatened, removed the Rood from its shrine in the dead of night, and set it up in a secret subterranean crypt of the ancient mansion of the Lawrences at Ashurst. There it remained for many years, deprived indeed of its supernatural powers, but still hallowed in the eyes of our pious family, who steadily maintained the true Roman faith through all the fire of persecution. In honour of the blessed Queen of Heaven, I was christened by the name of Mary, and solemnly dedicated to the service and preservation of her holy image, before which that ceremony was performed. It was my duty to renew the lights that were kept perpetually burning at her shrine, to supply flowers and decorations on the festivals, to superintend the robes with which she was invested, and to keep the key of the vaulted passage that led to

the secret crypt, which I was bound by a solemn oath never to discover. These duties did I unremittingly perform for a long succession of years, until, one by one, relations and kindred died away, and I was left alone in our time-worn mansion, the last and sole survivor of the ancient Catholic family of the Lawrences. Alone did I say? No—I was dwelling with the Mother of God, whose image was my solace, my companion, my comforter. Whole days have I passed with it under-ground, exchanging the glorious sunshine for the light of tapers, and all the bustle and society of the world for subterranean silence and my beloved image—and these days have been the happiest of my life.

“At length the Civil War broke out, and there went forth a fresh fire of persecution against the unhappy Papists, as we were called. All the emblems and symbols of our faith were ordered to be destroyed; and as we ourselves were vexed with sore oppressions, I shut up my house, and dwelt almost entirely in the

Crypt. A female servant, who was employed to bring me victuals, accidentally discovered my secret, which the traitress immediately divulged. The story flew from mouth to mouth, and in a few hours an infuriate mob, with Sir John Compton at their head, hallooing them on to the work of sacrilege, were heard approaching my dwelling. By their loud cries I quickly learnt their object, and prostrating myself before the figure of the Virgin, I solemnly swore to avenge any indignity that might be offered to her, if she would testify, by some sign, that she accepted me as her minister of retribution. No sooner had I pronounced the oath, than the nosegay, which I had placed in her hand, fell from her grasp, and rolled to my feet, in acceptance of my pledge! My very soul thrilled within me at the miracle—I trembled all over with reverence and awe—and yet I felt proud at being deemed worthy of such a gracious manifestation.

“With the yells and clamour of demons did

the mob of men, women, and children, break open the doors, and discover the secret crypt, and tear the sacred image from its shrine, fastening a rope around it, and dragging it sacrilegiously through the mire to Brambletye House, while Sir John Compton marched at their head, shouting profane songs, and the whole assembly filled the air with blasphemous cries of triumph. In the court-yard of Brambletye House, upon the very spot where yonder pile of fagots is prepared to avenge the deed, was the holy Rood of Ashurst hewn asunder, to be converted into kitchen billets. From a distance I beheld the deed, and had every blow of their hatchets been struck upon my heart, it could not have been smitten with a keener pang of agony. Scarcely knowing what I did, I prowled about the house till midnight, when I scaled the wall, entered the court-yard, collected the severed fragments of the sacred Rood, returned to the subterranean crypt, and employed the whole night in endeavouring to

make those fragments resume the form they had once worn, the likeness of the Mother of God.

“Maddened with grief, and thirsting for revenge, I again betook myself, on the next day, to Brambletye. The house was at that moment beleaguered by the Club-men, who were summoning every mansion to supply them with arms and money. I mixed with the multitude; and observing a richly-dressed infant seated on the grass, near the principal entrance, while its nurse had turned round to converse with a brother whom she had unexpectedly recognized among the Club-men, I snatched it up, rushed into the thickest of the crowd, and hurried towards my house, exulting in the thought that I had one of the accursed tribe of the Comptons in my possession. That infant was Julia.”

“Julia, and a Compton!” cried Walton—
“surely she is not a daughter of Sir John’s; not a sister of Jocelyn Compton?”

“Listen, and you shall hear all,” continued his companion. “Such was my wrath, such the

irritation of my soul, that I hastened to the secret crypt with my victim, intending to sacrifice it at the foot of the desecrated figure of the Virgin, whose command I had received to avenge her, even as Abraham prepared to offer up Isaac at the injunction of God. Leaving the infant at the foot of the shrine, I went to procure a knife for the execution of my dreadful purpose ; when, upon my return, the child smiled upon me, and stretched out its little arms towards me, and lo ! my bowels yearned within me, and a sudden gush of tenderness melted my heart, and I became filled with ruth and compassion. I know not why this should have been. I was a lone woman in the world, and had ever been so. I had never known the feelings of a mother ; but they rushed into my bosom now with an uncontrollable vehemence of affection. I threw away the knife, clasped the infant to my heart, kissed and wept over it, and the daughter of Pharaoh did not more rejoice over the child Moses, whom she had saved, than I did over my intended victim, now that I had spared it."

“ But I had neither the means nor the skill now to nourish it, and it became necessary to dispose of it immediately. I knew Valentine Walton and his wife ; knew their kindly and noble natures, their ample fortune, their keen regret at the want of offspring ; and, deeming that my charge could be no where better bestowed than with such a family, I hurried with it to East Grinstead. In the confusion of preparations for their contemplated departure from England, I gained admittance into the house, deposited my little burthen upon a bed, and retired unobserved. On the next day the family quitted this part of the country, and immediately afterwards embarked for the Barbadoes.

“ I soon learnt that the infant I had taken was the only child of Sir William Compton, a kinsman of Sir John’s, who was a visitor at Brambletye at the time of the occurrence ; and that a deadly feud had sprung up between them on the subject of the loss ; a feud which has ever since set the two branches of the family

in array against each other. So far I was gratified: I had quickly brought misery and disunion upon the sacrilegious race: I had done something towards the acquittance of my vow. From the moment that the profane act was committed, I had clad myself in deep mourning, and, coming out with the owl and the bat, I hovered at night-fall around the purlieus of the accursed house, banning its walls, and its inmates wherever I encountered them, until at length I was enabled to discover that arms, if not ammunition, were secretly conveyed into its walls for the support of the plot in which Sir John was engaged. Of this I gave information to the Protector, and thus 'twas I who procured the expulsion of its owner, and the pillage, spoliation, and dismantling of Brambletye by the troops: 'twas I who ferreted Sir John from his place of concealment, and made him fly the country; 'twas I who compelled Colonel Lilburne to carry the boy Jocelyn to London as a prisoner; 'twas I who counselled the pur-

chaser to dilapidate the mansion and carry off the materials. What a woman's arm could achieve in rending, tearing down, and pulling asunder, I have come in the dead of night to perform ; and when my strength failed me I spat upon the walls, and made them echo with my imprecations. I have sitten in the deep darkness, when the night storm was raging, and listened to the rattling of the tiles, slates, and fragments that were blown down from the roof, have felt the sound fall like the sweetest music on my soul, and anticipated the happy day when not one stone of the pile should be left standing upon another !”

“ And how have you escaped detection ?” inquired Walton.

“ I never ventured out till it was dusk, when my black garments, and the gloom of the forest, quickly enabled me to elude observation ; nor was there a dell or bushy dingle, pit or quarry, cave or hollow tree, hovel or hiding-place, in the whole neighbourhood, with which I was un-

acquainted, and in which I have not concealed myself, when close pressed by my pursuers. I have been hunted like a beast of prey, assailed with stones, shot at with cross-bow, arrow, and bullet; but the blessed Virgin, whose cause I was avenging, has miraculously preserved me from harm!"

"Enough of yourself," said Walton, who began to be weary of her history, "and tell me how you can establish the identity of Julia Compton."

"The rich ornaments she wore at the time of her being snatched away, and the gold chain and miniature with which she was playing, I have preserved ever since. They are in pious hands of safe custody, and shall be delivered to you. If we could only remove Jocelyn——"

"For him I have already made provision," said Walton; "he will not long thwart our plans; he will be presently disposed of, and I hope for life."

"Good!" ejaculated his companion, "then our

course is easy,—our success certain,—the splendours of Brambletye will never be restored. Julia's father, the late Sir William, left a large fortune, to which she is entitled;—your rival will be removed; you will be enabled to offer her a knowledge of her parents, a restoration to her family, and a noble estate, on condition that she accepts your hand, which, when her present circumstances of obscurity, poverty, and discountenance by the world shall be aggravated by the loss of Jocelyn, she will hardly think of refusing."

"I see it all!" cried Walton, "it is feasible: I am ready to perform the conditions. Give me the flambeau, which I see you have provided, and let us commence the conflagration."

She complied with his request, setting fire to the pile with her own hand on one side, while Walton lighted it on the other; and, as the ascending flames flashed upon the bare walls and lofty towers of Brambletye, while they threw a ghastly glare upon her withered features, she

lifted up her arms, and her eyes, that sparkled with triumph, towards heaven, ejaculating in a tone of solemn animation, — “ *Sancta Maria, Regina Cæli!*” thou art avenged; even upon the very spot where thou wert sacrilegiously outraged. What! shall Nebuchadnezzar, while he is vaunting of his great Babylon, be bereft of his wits? Shall Herod, while he is priding himself in the applause of his people, be eaten with worms? Shall Haman, while practising to destroy the people, be hanged on the gallows fifty feet high, which he had prepared for Mordecai? Shall the house, where the Philistines met together to sport with Sampson, fall upon their heads?—and shall not these accursed walls where—”

At this moment the high wind conveyed some sparks of the fire into the secret vault where Sir John Compton had deposited the gunpowder, which, it will be remembered, Colonel Lilburne had failed to discover when he carried off the arms;—of which even Mrs. Lawrence

was ignorant;—and which had ever since remained undetected. A tremendous explosion ensued, which blew off the remainder of the roof, and levelled two of the towers of Brambletye. The dead body of Mark Walton was found in a field beyond the postern-gate, and the unfortunate Mary Lawrence, discovered near one of the lodges, only survived long enough to relate the cause of the dreadful accident by which she perished.

CHAPTER IX.

“All things that we ordained festival
Turn from their office——
Our instruments to melancholy bells,
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change,
And all things turn them to the contrary.”

SHAKSPEARE.

“You are most welcome, Sir, to Pippingford Lodge,” said Constantia to Jocelyn, as she re-entered it upon her return from London. “These happy looks, these mutual smiles, which have lately been but rare visitants to our abode, sufficiently attest to me that all my wishes are gratified—that my mission has not been a fruitless one. I congratulate myself once more upon having disregarded the forms of etiquette. Had I not made known that

you loved Julia, but dreaded an union with the daughter of Valentine Walton, the secret of her birth would never have been revealed; had I not imparted it to you, the discovery would have been unavailing,—and two people formed to confer happiness upon one another, would have remained apart, the victims to ceremony and observance.”

Jocelyn expressed the most fervent gratitude to his high-minded benefactress; declaring that the life she had preserved for him would have possessed little value in his eyes, had she not consummated her kindness by thus accomplishing his wishes with respect to Julia. “I congratulate you as well as myself,” resumed Constantia, “at being no longer intimidated by the scarecrow of a sneer, or the bugbear of a laugh, when so small an exertion of courage has secured your happiness for ever. Would you desire rank? Julia’s is the true nobility, for her patent is signed by the hand of God, and stamped upon her soul. Wealth? who so

rich in charms and virtues, the best of all opulence, as Julia? Family connexions? She may still possess them; and if she have them not, she deserves them, which is surely better than possessing without meriting them." Our hero professed his full acquiescence in these sentiments, and renewed his acknowledgements for the inappreciable services Constantia had rendered him. Julia embraced her friend with silent but fervent demonstrations of grateful affection; and Mrs. Walton contemplated the scene before her with an expression of benignant complacency. Perhaps it would have been difficult, at that moment, to find a little circle of more happy faces and grateful hearts, than those assembled beneath the roof of Pippingford Lodge.

The loud explosion of the night before had been taken for a clap of thunder; and they were therefore quite unprepared for the tidings of the catastrophe, that were now made known to them by three or four terrified messengers

at once, each bearing a more alarming version than his predecessor. All, however, agreed that a strange gentleman had been found dead, and that dame Lawrence, or the black ghost, as she was designated by others, had only survived for a few minutes after being discovered. Deeply interested in the fate of the unfortunate sufferers, and anxious also to learn the cause of the accident, as well as the real damage sustained by the building, Jocelyn declared his intention of setting off immediately for Brambletye, for which purpose Constantia offered the use of the carriage in which she had arrived from London. It was ordered to the door; and he was upon the point of stepping into it, when four men suddenly started from beneath the garden-hedge, two of whom seized the horses' heads to prevent their moving, and the two others, interposing themselves between Jocelyn and the house, called upon him to surrender, as they had a warrant for his apprehension.

“My apprehension!” exclaimed Jocelyn in utter astonishment—“on what charge?”

“On a charge of high treason,” replied one of the officers.

“This must be some mistake!” cried Jocelyn, recovering a little from his first amazement—“you are arresting the wrong person—my name is Jocelyn Compton.”

“We are perfectly aware of it,” replied the man:—“here is our warrant: if you will examine it, you will find that we are under no error.”

“So I perceive, indeed,” replied Jocelyn, after having inspected the parchment; “but your employers are: they must have been imposed upon by false intelligence.”

“We hope it may prove so,” said the man respectfully; “but our orders are positive to convey you instantly to the Tower. We have comrades within call, and resistance would be useless.”

“I am not mad enough to attempt it, when

my innocence must so quickly ensure my discharge. I am ready to attend you."

"We will borrow this carriage to convey you to the place of rendezvous," said the man: and he accordingly motioned to Jocelyn to enter it; which he did, followed by three of the party, when the fourth mounted the box, and they drove off at a brisk rate with their prisoner. Upon the first appearance of the strangers, and the discovery of their purpose, Julia, uttering a shriek of dismay, clung to her lover as if to prevent his departure; and though Constantia and Mrs. Walton, who possessed more presence of mind, and had besides a perfect confidence that the seizure originated in error, used every effort to inspire her with their own fortitude, she remained plunged in the deepest grief and consternation. Never was there a more sudden reverse of feeling, indeed, than was experienced by the whole party, which but a few minutes before was exchanging happy congratulations; for though Constantia and Mrs. Walton had a

full conviction of Jocelyn's innocence, they were by no means equally satisfied that his freedom from guilt would ensure his immediate restoration to liberty. There had been of late so much plotting and caballing in public affairs ; so many treasonable designs, real or pretended ; and the measures of Government had become so capricious and arbitrary ; that hardly any individual was safe, if prejudice and suspicion had once attached to him, although upon no better grounds than the evidence of spies and suborners. So far, however, from communicating these sinister misgivings to Júlia, they affected to entertain a full persuasion of his immediate discharge, and succeeded at length in pacifying the first vehemence of her agitation.

Jocelyn, in the meantime, whose impetuous temperament was ill-adapted to brook disappointment of any sort, and particularly a separation from Julia at a moment so interesting to his heart, pursued his journey in a most indignant and splenetic mood, tormented with the

belief that his rival, of whose death he was ignorant, would renew his odious and insolent solicitations in his absence; and worrying himself with vain conjectures as to the cause of his apprehension, and the consequences it was likely to produce. His conductors professed an entire ignorance of the former, though they seemed to infer, from the nature of the orders they had received, that the charge against him was considered to be well substantiated;—and as to the latter, they really could not undertake to pronounce an opinion, though they kindly reminded him that an accusation of high treason was no very light or trifling affair. In this state of suspense, of all others the most irritating and insupportable to our hero, he was doomed to remain until their arrival at the Tower, when he was conveyed across the drawbridge, and passed beneath the low, dark, and frowning arch that leads into the penetralia of that gloomy fortress; not without painfully reverting to the fate of many, who, in traversing its ponderous portal,

had bidden adieu to the world, and had only repassed it to be conducted to the scaffold. It appeared as if perpetual disappointment was to be his fate through life; as if the cup of promised joy was raised to his lips only to be rudely dashed to the earth; and to add to his vexations he already began to anticipate the probability of losing his appointment under the Queen, to which he had looked forward as the principal means of support for himself and Julia.

He welcomed the intelligence as a relief from uncertainty, when Sir John Robinson the Lieutenant of the Tower, on accompanying him to his apartment, informed him that he was charged, on the oath of Mark Walton, as an accomplice with Colonel Rathborn and others, in a plot for procuring the King's death, and the overthrow of the Government. That he should be implicated with that conspirator, after having dined with him and his associates at Battersea, did not much surprise him; nor did he apprehend there would be much difficulty in excul-

pating himself from any participation in their nefarious project ; but that Mark Walton should be the informant against him was a circumstance for which he was utterly at a loss to account. That despicable personage, ever prowling about the purlieus of Whitehall to pry into whatever might be turned to account, had observed Colonel Rathborn's daily visits to Jocelyn when the latter was confined from the effects of the fire, and knowing him to be a discontented and suspicious character, determined to watch their proceedings with the utmost narrowness. With this view he had followed and traced them to the house at Battersea, and, lurking about it in order to watch his departure, had been encountered by Jocelyn and Winky Boss, muffled up in a great coat, but had escaped recognition by striking suddenly into the fields. What he had observed upon this occasion Walton kept to himself ; and it was not until some time after, when he wanted to get rid of his rival, that he thought of implicating him with Colonel Rath-

born, whose design having by this time transpired, himself and all his accomplices had been seized and committed to the Tower.*

* “ Their indictment was for conspiring the King’s death, and the overthrow of the Government ; having in the King’s absence from the city, laid their plot and contrivance for surprisal of the Tower, the killing General Monk, Sir John Robinson, the Lieutenant of the Tower, and Sir Richard Brown, Major-General of the City ; and then to have declared for an equal division of lands. The better to effect this design, the city was to have been fired, and the portcullices to have been let down to keep out all assistance ; the Horse-Guards to have been surprised in the several innes where they were quartered, several ostlers having been gained for that purpose. The Tower had been viewed, and its surprisal ordered by boats over the moat, and so to scale the wall. There was in the conspiracy one Alexander, who made his escape, who had distributed several sums of money to these conspirators ; and for the carrying on the design more effectually, they were told of great ones that sate constantly in London, who issued out all orders ; which council received their directions from a council in Holland, who sate with the States. The 3rd of September was pitched upon for the attempt, as being found, by a scheme erected for that purpose, a luckie day, a planet then ruling which portended the downfall of the monarchy. They were found guilty of High Treason, and executed at Tyburn.”—*Heath’s Chronicle*.

No sooner had Jocelyn learnt the real nature of the charge against him, than he wrote to the Duke of Monmouth and Lord Rochester, explaining the circumstances of his connection with Colonel Rathborn, and soliciting their good offices in exculpating his character, and effecting his discharge. At the same time he communicated all particulars to his friends at Pippingford Lodge, considering the whole affair as so unimportant, and speaking so confidently of his early liberation, that Julia felt considerably re-assured as to his fate; though it was an additional pang to her to reflect that his efforts for her preservation had entailed upon him his acquaintance with this dangerous Colonel, and all the vexations of which it might be the eventual cause. The powerful noblemen, for whose favourable influence Jocelyn had solicited, were neither indifferent to the injustice he was suffering, nor remiss in their efforts for his extrication; but he had one enemy at court, much more powerful than all

his friends. This was the vindictive Lady Castlemaine, who eagerly seized this opportunity of crushing a man whom she had never forgiven, by poisoning the King's ear with the darkest insinuations against him. The tragical and inexplicable death of Mark Walton at Brambletye House, the seat of the Comptons, just as he was preparing to substantiate his charges against Jocelyn, quite satisfied her mind, she said, not only as to the cause of his destruction, but as to its author. Walton had been an approved friend of the King's; Compton had already been once in disgrace for his insolence and disaffection. The intimacy of such a man with Colonel Rathborn, and his dining with the assembled conspirators against his Majesty's life, facts which he himself had not the hardihood to deny, admitted but of one interpretation:—and she had even the baseness to insinuate that he would have wronged his Majesty in the tenderest point, by insulting her with licentious propositions, merely because she had

once condescended to dance with him, a circumstance to which she attributed the dislike she had ever since felt against him. By such arts the King's prejudices were so strongly excited, that he was persuaded, without further inquiry, to give orders for his dismissal from the post he held as the Queen's Private Secretary.

This announcement excited the greatest consternation among his friends at Pippingford Lodge. Day after day, had they been feeding their hopes by anticipating his emancipation; but this unexpected proof of royal displeasure, was a startling evidence that the proceedings against him were of a darker and more alarming character than they had contemplated; and they began to give way to the most sinister forebodings as to his ultimate fate. Buoyant and vivacious as it usually was, the mind of Julia began to sink under the sickness of hope deferred; but the fortitude of Constantia seemed to gather strength with the necessity for its exertion, and the mixture of romance, and

generous enthusiasm, that constituted her character, impelled her to undertake an enterprize for Jocelyn's liberation, which the imagined urgency of his danger first suggested to her mind, and which she immediately proceeded to execute with her customary promptitude and energy. "Be of good cheer," she said to Julia, as she embraced and bade her adieu; "I will not tell you my plan, lest I should excite hopes which the event may not justify; it has reference, however, to the rescue of Jocelyn from the Tower; and lest the apparent inadequacy of my means should excite despondency, it may be well to remind you that the mouse has been able to extricate the lion from the toils. I have saved Jocelyn before—I may do so again—Adieu!"

It was Constantia's purpose to seek an interview with the King, whose ear she believed to have been abused; to undertake Jocelyn's vindication; and to implore that he might be either brought to trial and allowed to exculpate

himself, or be immediately set at liberty. Her courageous self-acting mind needed no counsellor in this affair; and with her usual disregard of appearances, where there was a great object in view, she set out alone to execute her project. On her arrival in London, however, she found it necessary to consult some friend as to the best method of gaining access to his Majesty; and proceeding for this purpose to Alderman Staunton, then staying at his country house, near Hampton, she had not only the satisfaction of learning that the Court was at the neighbouring palace, but that the King had signified his intention of visiting the alderman, for the purpose of inspecting the alterations he had been making in his house and grounds. This was an opportunity which suggested itself to her as infinitely better adapted to her purpose than the publicity of a court; and instantly determining to avail herself of it, she awaited, with some impatience, the arrival of the day appointed for the royal visit. On

that morning, she paid a more than usual attention to her toilette, and arrayed herself in the most becoming garb that her mourning, which she still retained, would allow; whispering to herself, as if her lofty mind needed an excuse for this uncustomary vanity, that whatever personal attractions she possessed might at least be rendered subservient to a good cause, when so many others in the neighbourhood of the Court perverted their's to far different purposes.

The King, who came almost unattended, (except by a long retinue of dogs, which, to the grievous annoyance of the alderman, left marks of their visit in every room,) had no sooner seen Constantia, than he started with surprise and pleasure; and having whispered to the alderman to inquire who she was, continued in the same low tone, “Tilly vally, Mr. Alderman! there is no Dutch blood in her. On my life! her mother must have played the worthy Burgomaster false with some gallant Cavalier of

Gaul, for she is a French woman all over, and i'faith! a stately damsel she is. Why have you not brought her to our Court? So noble an eagle ought not to be kept any longer in the Mew." At these words he went up to Constantia, and addressing her with that elegant courtesy, which he so well knew how to assume, fell into a conversation with her that lasted a considerable time. If he had been struck in the first instance with the grand and majestic sedateness of her beauty, so different from the languishing and voluptuous frivolity of countenance to which he had been accustomed, he found in the solidity of her judgment, and the pure lofty tone of her sentiments, a not less forcible contrast to the loose blandishments and jejune flippancy of the Court females. Even the decorous style of her dress, sombre as it was, seemed to assimilate with the character of her beauty, and to possess peculiar attractions for one who had been so long satiated with an unreserved display of personal charms, that he

rather desired provocatives for his imagination than his eye. Having long since exhausted the ordinary routine of enjoyments, novelty had become his great desideratum; here he beheld it in its most piquant and delectable form; and such was its fascination, that his enjoyment seemed to increase with the protraction of their colloquy.

How much longer it might have lasted, it would be difficult to determine, had not Alderman Staunton, who was quite in a fidget till his Majesty could inspect the alterations in his grounds and gardens, approached to inquire when he would be pleased to visit his pine-houses, where he had some fruit raised from seed given to him by the royal gardener, Mr. Rose, of larger dimensions than any that had been yet produced. “’Ods fish! Mr. Alderman,” cried Charles, gaily, “we crave your pardon, but had you invited us to see the gardens of Alcinous, or those whose golden fruit

was entrusted to the Hesperides, we should have forgotten them all, while listening to this fair enchantress. Lead on: the King shall follow you, and this shall be his queen, worthy indeed to reign upon Olympus, as being still more majestic and beautiful than Homer's ox-eyed Juno." He bowed, and tendered his arm; Constantia accepted it, and they proceeded to the pinery, where the worthy alderman's prolix history of every pine, which he usually narrated to every visitant, was cut short by the disappearance of his royal guest, who walked out of an opposite door, and strolled with his fair companion among the walks and parterres of the garden, until they entered a small arbour, in which he invited Constantia to sit down and rest herself.

Deeming this an advantageous opportunity for her purpose, she implored his Majesty's pardon for the liberty she was about to take, especially in the first interview with which she

had been ever honoured ; and after a few more prefatory apologies, concluded by stating that she had a favour to ask.

“ *Pardî, ma belle!*” cried the King with great animation, “ I am right glad to hear it. It likes me well to be asked favours by those who have favours to bestow ; your’s therefore is granted, even before it is named.”

In as concise a manner as possible, Constantia now explained the origin of Jocelyn’s connection with Colonel Rathborn ; vindicated his conduct and his loyalty ; and wound up her statement by requesting, that his Majesty would be graciously pleased to order his immediate discharge from prison.

“ And so to restore Mistress Beverning an admired admirer, I presume,” said Charles, whose dusky countenance had been gradually lowering. “ More than once has this saucy spark already presumptuously attempted to cross my path.”

“ Not for myself am I a petitioner, I most solemnly assure your Majesty,” said Constantia,

“but for a dear friend who is betrothed to Mr. Compton, and whose anguish at his arrest, if I had the power of depicting it, would render your Majesty not less anxious than myself to remove it.”

“Gramercy ! madam, if there be a distressed Amanda in the case,” said Charles, with a more cheerful countenance, “I am bound, as a true Knight of the Garter to afford her relief, by restoring her Damon to her arms ; but as to my giving an order for his discharge—” He paused, for he had the fear of Lady Castlemaine before his eyes, and shook his head, as if the contemplated measure were impracticable ; but after a moment’s consideration, he continued:—

“There are better methods of obliging Mistress Beverning, without implicating the King. On Friday I shall return to Whitehall, whither I can order him to be brought up in the Tower-
wherry for examination by the Privy Council. If he have brisk and stirring friends, let them run on board the boat, which will be but lightly

manned, and whisk him away ; and I will take good care that there be no further hue and cry for his recapture. How say you, my stately queen of Olympus, can this be done ?”

“ At all events it can be attempted,” said Constantia ; “ and I shall ever hold myself indebted to your Majesty.”

“ Tush, madam !” said Charles—“ the King hopes to be soon indebted to Mistress Beverning ; but he must first set his seal to the present bargain.” So saying, he took her hand, and having tenderly pressed it, drew off a brilliant diamond ring from his finger, which he was about to place upon her’s, when she exclaimed—“ Your Majesty must excuse me ; I have received one favour already in the gracious compliance with which my petition has been honoured ; I dare not so soon accept a second, lest I should prove bankrupt in gratitude. This will be for our next meeting,”—and she repassed the ring upon the finger from which he had withdrawn it. “ For our next meeting be it !”

cried the King, "and the day be an early one, and the interview not less delightful than the present!" He still retained her hand, and was proceeding to indulge in a species of toying and dalliance not very acceptable to Constantia, when she started up, exclaiming—"Here come our worthy host and his friends; they are seeking your Majesty—shall we rejoin them?" And she immediately walked forward to the party, accompanied by the King, who refused to resign the arm which he had placed within his own, and whispering once more in her ear, "Remember Friday!" returned with her into the house.

It yet wanted five days to Friday, and these five days did Constantia, who immediately returned to London, dedicate to the completion of her enterprize, with an acuteness of contrivance, and prompt energy of execution, which, when seconded by her ample command of money, could scarcely fail of success. The Friday morning at length arrived, and Jocelyn, who had received notice that he was to be conveyed

to Whitehall for examination, and who had already drawn the most sinister auguries from his dismissal from his office of Private Secretary, began to think that his ruin was indeed resolved, since even that public disgrace was deemed insufficient. Under any other circumstances indignation might have given him fortitude, or the consciousness of innocence might have reconciled him to the quiet endurance of his wrongs; but the thought of what Julia must suffer—her unprotected state—his own destitution, now that he had been cashiered—and the uncertainty of his future fate—all conspired to affect him with an unusual prostration of spirits. Nor was this feeling lessened when manacles were placed upon his wrists; and he was guarded down the water-steps of the fortress, and ushered into the Tower-wherry.

As the prisoner was thus secured, and no idea was entertained of danger or an attempted rescue in traversing the Thames at mid-day, the boat, as the King had anticipated, was but

lightly guarded. They had passed London Bridge, and had made good progress, pulling against a strong current towards Westminster, when the rowers perceived a heavy Dutch-built boat coming rapidly towards them with the tide, and having sailors on board, who by the bottles in their hands, and their ridiculous gestures, seemed to be intoxicated. Jocelyn's watermen having already called out to them to look a-head, were repeating the order in no very decent language, when the strange boat ran right on board of them, and at the same moment the sailors jumped into the Tower-wherry, tossed its crew neck and heels, with the exception of Jocelyn, into the Dutch boat, of which they brought away the oars, and instantly began pulling with the stream towards London Bridge. All this was so rapidly effected, and the crew of the wherry were so unprepared for attack, that they had no opportunity of making resistance; and they now found themselves in a heavy Dutch boat which they were unable to manage

from the want of oars, while their outcries were either unnoticed, or treated as the idle clamour of some wrangling Dutchmen.

Jocelyn would have been utterly at a loss to know the meaning of this rescue, had he not recognized Winky Boss among the foremost of his deliverers, who having whispered to him to sit still, took the stump of a pipe from his waist-coat-pocket, which he inserted into one corner of his mouth, and then seizing an oar, began to pull with the regularity, and almost with the power, of a steam-engine. Our hero's manacles were quickly removed and thrown into the river, and thus in gallant plight, with the King's arms painted upon her stern, and the royal flag streaming upon the wind behind her, did the wherry pass beneath the very guns of the fortress to which she belonged, bearing the rescued prisoner rapidly along without challenge or interruption from any of the ships of war that they passed. Before the tide failed them, a stiff and favourable breeze sprung up; they spread

their canvas, the boat was built expressly for expedition, and in a space of time that would have rendered all pursuit unavailing, even had it been attempted, they found themselves at the mouth of the river. Here they observed a small Dutch brig, tacking backward and forward; and running alongside, Jocelyn was utterly amazed at observing Constantia, Julia, and Mrs. Walton, standing upon the deck. It is unnecessary to state with what transports they welcomed him on board, with what delight of heart he found himself so unexpectedly restored to liberty and to his friends, or what rapture of gratitude he expressed towards Constantia, when he learnt that he was indebted to her once more for his deliverance.

“To me, individually,” said Constantia, “there is less merit due for this enterprize than you seem to imagine. The King himself suggested the mode of your escape, and by the promise of a liberal reward, your trusty servant, Winky Boss, induced some of his shrewd and

stout-hearted countrymen to undertake its execution ; a task which they have well and happily performed. For our ulterior views this vessel was engaged, and Julia and Mrs. Walton needed no inducements to accompany me on board it, when they knew the purposes to which it was to be applied. We are now bound for France, whither we shall soon be wafted by this auspicious breeze. My friends will not regret their temporary absence from a country, where their mutual happiness might have been still longer delayed, or ultimately defeated, by perjury and malice ; and for myself, I have important plans in agitation, which could only be executed on the spot to which we are now directing our course."

On their arrival at Calais, which place they reached without any adverse incident, the sailors were remunerated even beyond their expectations and dismissed ; Winky Boss being retained to accompany the party to Paris, in which capital Constantia declared that she had weighty

purposes to accomplish. Contrary to her usual habits of reserve, she put herself forward as the regulator of every thing during their progress, superintending all arrangements with an alacrity that indicated the pleasure she derived from the journey; while her constitutional sedateness, which, since the death of her father, had almost amounted to melancholy, was now succeeded by a calm, smiling happiness, which her friends noticed with not less satisfaction than surprise. She appeared to be elated, and sustained by some great, though secret, design, upon which her heart brooded with a serene delight. What it was, they had no means of guessing, for though she occasionally alluded to her ulterior plans, with a mysterious smile, she never dropped a word that might enable them even to guess at her intentions. It was sufficient for Julia to find in the happiness of her friend, the presence of her lover, and her own altered prospects, a sufficient warrant for that ebullient cheerfulness which was natural to her, and in which she now

indulged without control, although it was occasionally checked by a reflection upon the obscurity that still involved her birth. Such was the state of exhilaration in which they all arrived at Paris, where Constantia announced that it was by no means her intention to resign the authority which she had exercised during the journey, but on the contrary, to assume a more plenary control, and exact a more implicit obedience than any she had hitherto claimed; adding, with a significant look, that when she restored to them their full liberty, she flattered herself they would not be dissatisfied with her sway, during the continuance of her temporary usurpation.

“The first act of my despotism,” said Constantia, taking the hands of Julia and Jocelyn in her own; “the first mandate to which I shall expect an unconditional submission, is that these my subjects and friends shall consent to be immediately married. I wish to place their happiness beyond the reach of fate and fortune: they have experienced such sudden

and unexpected reverses of both, that they must snatch the blessings of life while yet within their reach, or they may still elude their grasp. What means this rebellious blood, my dear Julia, that is mounting to your cheeks? I forgive your blushes, but I will have no further mutiny against my wishes. As to your intended husband, he already stands charged with treasons enough, and I am happy to observe that upon this occasion he is the most obedient and loyal of all subjects. I charge myself with every thing that appertains to your marriage; all shall be arranged and provided by me. I will have no interloper, no assistant, not even an adviser. For some days I shall of course be much occupied, and if I leave you alone more than strict politeness may warrant, I doubt not you will excuse me, even if you did not know that I was employed in accomplishing your happiness."

In the interval that elapsed before the time fixed for their nuptials, Jocelyn renewed his

acquaintance with some of the families whom he had known in his former residence at Paris: at the request, or rather by the order, of Constantia, Julia called upon several of her mother's kindred who dwelt in the metropolis, as well as upon some of her late father's connexions, all of whom she was imperatively commanded to invite to the wedding-feast. Jocelyn received similar instructions as to his own friends. None needed a second solicitation to be partakers of a joyous ceremony which, in France, is always celebrated with an extraordinary festivity, and which upon the present occasion, Constantia had invested with a degree of costly magnificence, rather adapted, as her friends thought, to her own generosity of heart, than to the impoverished circumstances of the parties. At length arrived the happy day for which such splendid preparations had been made. Constantia accompanied the bride and bridegroom to the church, where she witnessed

the completion of the solemnities, but declaring that very particular reasons would prevent her participation in the banquet she had provided, she requested that her friends would call upon her, after their guests had departed, at a particular house in Paris, of which she gave them the address. This was a great disappointment to all parties, but as she declared herself to be more inexorable and despotic upon this point, than any other, they forbore vain solicitations, and prepared to entertain their visitants with all due cheerfulness and hospitality. Exclamations of astonishment and delight burst from almost every mouth as they entered the banqueting-room, which had been decorated, under Constantia's immediate orders, with a richness that would have appeared gorgeous, had it not been relieved by the exquisite elegance and taste of every embellishment. Nor was the repast incompatible with the splendid saloon appropriated for its reception. The

most scientific culinary artists had been engaged to furnish it, and the guests seemed resolved to do full justice to their skill.

Long sittings after a feast being happily as much unpractised in France at that period, as they are now, the company, after drinking the health of the bride and bridegroom, with that of the munificent foundress of the entertainment, took their departure at an early hour; and Julia, Jocelyn, and Mrs. Walton proceeded immediately in a carriage to keep their appointment with Constantia. The driver stopped at the arched doorway of an extensive and ancient pile with projecting stone-shafted windows, of which the glass was rendered impervious to sight, by being stained of a deep purple colour. They alighted and were ushered into a small plainly-furnished parlour, much wondering what could be the meaning of this mysterious rendezvous, or the object of a small green curtain which hung against the wall on one side of the chamber. Their doubts as to the latter

were presently dispelled, for the curtain being slowly drawn up, discovered an iron grating, behind which was seen a female figure, attired as a candidate nun, who is about to take the veil. It was Constantia ! Her dark luxuriant locks had been all cut off, and the plain black coif that enclosed her face, imparted a pale hue to her countenance, while it made her eyes appear even more large and lustrous than usual ; altogether injuring the general character of her beauty, but assimilating well with the solemn, though sweet and serene, expression of her features at the present moment.

“ Constantia ! ” exclaimed her three visitants, in accents of profound amazement.

“ Yes, my dear friends,” she replied : “ it is Constantia, who having this morning accomplished, by your happy union, every object for which she wished to live, is about to exchange the world and all its anxieties, for the seclusion and happiness of the cloister. This step I have long contemplated ; to this destiny I was

peculiarly adapted by my temperament—to this destiny am I now inevitably impelled by the circumstances of my fate. There was but one woman, to whom my whole heart was bound by the ties of friendship; there was but one man for whom—in whose favour—” She paused, blushed deeply, and appeared confused. At length, after a few moments’ deliberation, she continued, still, however, keeping her eyes fixed upon the ground—“Should I not rather be proud of so difficult a victory, than ashamed to confess a weakness that I have conquered? There was but one woman to whom I was bound by friendship, there was but one man whom I loved. I have triumphed over my passion—I have proved the sincerity of my friendship—I have made these two people happy by bestowing them upon one another—I have not lived in vain. My purpose in life has been accomplished; I am now useless to the world, and to me it has lost all its attractions. What is man? —Yesterday’s clay, to-morrow’s dust! In a few

short years all that moves, or owns the breath of life, will have passed away. I cannot attach myself to this fleeting pageant; my soul rejects its tantalizing and evanescent joys, and yearns for more enduring beatitudes. I have therefore resigned it, that I may dedicate myself to Heaven; and that our double wedding may be solemnized on the same day, I am about to become the bride of an immortal Bridegroom. The ring with which I am to be married to Him has been already laid upon the altar; this night I am to pronounce the vows, and to be solemnly invested with the veil; and this therefore, my dear friends, is the last time, in this world at least, that we shall ever—ever—” Again she paused, for her voice had grown indistinct and tremulous, while her throat, swelling with the emotion which she in vain struggled to subdue, denied her the power of further utterance.

Julia, who guessed the threatened separation, rather by the distress of her friend than by her expressions, rushed forward, and falling upon

her knees, while she held up her clasped hands against the iron bars, passionately exclaimed—
“ Oh, no, no, no! My kind, my generous, my noble benefactress! my own Constantia! you cannot, will not leave us for ever! We may at least see you, if it be only thus;—if it be only to convince you that you have not sacrificed yourself in vain,—to prove to you that we are happy—to renew to you the assurances of our eternal gratitude.”

“ It must not be,” said Constantia, shaking her head—“ I should not dare to trust my heart; a minute’s interview might destroy all the resolutions of a month. Julia, Jocelyn, Mrs. Walton! help me to be firm. Prove yourselves to be indeed my friends by assisting me to support this most painful—most trying—”
In spite of all her efforts, the tears flowed so fast that she was again unable to proceed, until she had paused for a few moments, when she gathered strength to exclaim—“ These are the

tears of the flesh, not of the spirit ; the body is weak, but the soul is firm. My dear, dear friends, farewell!—farewell for ever! Consider me as bidding you a last adieu from my death-bed ; these hands which I pass to you through the bars of my convent, consider them as being stretched out to you from the grave ; henceforward look upon Constantia as dead ! ”

At this instant the chapel-bell of the convent began to toll for the approaching ceremony, a sound which, in conjunction with the last words she had heard, fell with such an appalling effect upon Julia's ear, that uttering a shriek of anguish, she threw herself upon Constantia's extended arm, grasping it as if she would prevent the execution of her purpose, and sobbing aloud in an uncontrollable agony of grief. Mrs. Walton, whose firmer soul had hitherto enabled her to support the scene, now yielded to her emotion ; her compressed lips moved rapidly up and down, the lower part of her face was

convulsed, and the tears rolled rapidly though silently down her cheeks. Jocelyn, who had been endeavouring to set an example of firmness, was no longer able to resist the contagion of the distress that surrounded him, and the drops, gushing suddenly from his eyes, rained upon the hand that had been held out to him through the bars.

“Oh God!” exclaimed Constantia, with vehemence; “this is too much;—women are feeble and sensitive creatures; I can bear to see them weep. But the tears of a man—of the man whom I— Spare me this pang.—Oh, spare me for the love of mercy! Send me not to my heavenly espousals desecrated with the tears of an earthly attachment.”

She had shut her eyes as if to avoid the sight, and now withdrawing her hands, and pressing them both upon her left side, apparently in much pain, from the violent heaving of her bosom, she ejaculated:—“My heart! my

throbbing heart! it will break—it will burst.”

——Turning suddenly round at these words, she threw herself on her knees before a large crucifix that stood on one side the grating, exclaiming, as she embraced the feet of the image:—
“ Save me, help me, thou husband of my soul !”
and fixing her streaming eyes upon the figure, her lips continued moving for some time, in fervent though inaudible prayer.

Fortified by this act of devotion, she arose with much more composure; her features were animated by a religious enthusiasm, as she again passed her arm through the grating, took Jocelyn’s hand, which she tenderly clasped, and exclaimed:—“ Farewell for ever! May the blessing of Almighty God be upon you !” The same parting benediction was then solemnly pronounced upon Julia, who alternately pressed the extended hand to her bosom, and covered it with kisses and tears.

At this moment the bell again tolled; the

door of the inner room opened ; the bishop and a train of attendants entered to escort her to the altar, where she was to receive the veil and pronounce the irrevocable vow ; and Constantia, raising her arms to Heaven, and chanting in a low and still tremulous voice : “ *Ancilla Christi sum,*” walked slowly out of the room. As the door that shut her out for ever from the world was closed behind her, the sound smote the heart of Julia, with an effect as deathlike as if she had seen her friend lowered into the grave, and had heard the earth rattling upon her coffin. Fixing her eyes upon the door through which she had passed, she remained for some time gazing at it in a stupor of bewildered grief ; when, as if suddenly recollecting herself, she called in a low and hollow voice, — “ *Constantia !*” After a short pause she repeated it in a louder tone ; and again a third time in a still more elevated key ; but finding her unavailing cry succeeded by a dead silence, her

whole frame became agitated with convulsive heavings. She uttered a low shuddering groan, burst immediately afterwards into a shriek of hysterical laughter, and, sinking into the arms of her husband, was conveyed out of the apartment in a passion of ungovernable grief.

THE CONCLUSION.

“ But mistress know yourself ; down on your knees,
And thank heaven, fasting, for a good man’s love :
For I must tell you friendly in your ear,
When you can, you are not for all markets ;
Cry the man mercy, love him, take his offer.”

SHAKSPEARE.

ON their return to the house where the marriage had been celebrated, Jocelyn found a casket addressed to himself, which had been left during their absence at the convent. He broke it open, and discovered a bundle of papers, together with a long letter from Constantia, of which he eagerly commenced the perusal. It began with stating, that as the immense fortune left to her by her father had always been an incumbrance, and was now become absolutely

useless, she was under the necessity of requesting her friends to divide the burthen among them, so far as to lighten her own load; though she had already enriched her convent, of which the Abbess was her distant relation, and had besides retained sufficient for all the purposes of charity. In this emergency she trusted that her dear friends would accept as a marriage gift, the extensive estates of Saint Ouen in Normandy, which had devolved to her in right of her mother, and of which she herself was quite incompetent to take the charge; and referring to the papers in the box, which contained an irreversible conveyance of the property in question, she requested, that if they resided in the mansion, its name might be changed to the Chateau de Compton. As the house in which the nuptial feast had been held, and which she had herself taken pains to decorate, might from those circumstances possess some value in their eyes, independently of its convenience as a Parisian residence, she requested

that they would still further oblige her by accepting it ; and after renewing her blessings and good wishes for their happiness, she concluded by stating, that although her resolution never to see them again would remain inflexible, and cemented by a solemn vow, yet she should be happy in still occasionally communicating with them by letter.

At the bottom of the box was a separate parcel for Mrs. Walton, in which was found a most affectionate letter, and a conveyance of property that ensured her a competent provision for the remainder of her life.

Thinking it might have a soothing influence upon Julia's agitated mind, Jocelyn read to her the letter addressed to himself ; but its effect was far from tranquilising, for these affecting proofs of her friend's unbounded generosity and tenderness, only melted her into a fresh flood of tears, and increased the pang of separation by showing the inappreciable value of what she had lost. Jocelyn, too, upon this second

perusal, made a discovery that still added to the incalculable obligations she had conferred upon him, for he recognised, by the hand-writing, the munificent friend who had some time before sent him a box of gold to extricate him from his difficulties, and an anonymous monitory letter for the regulation of his conduct. By far the most welcome part of her communication, and that which they both valued above all her gifts, lavish as they were, was the promise of her still allowing an interchange of their minds by means of correspondence. To Julia, especially, this was a consolation that much alleviated the bitterness of her grief. Constantia was not now so utterly dead to, and severed from, the world, as she had previously seemed to be. Their spirits could still meet and embrace one another; their hearts could sympathise together; their intellects could participate in the same ideas: it was a privilege too estimable not to be immediately exercised, and both Jocelyn and Julia availed themselves of it

without delay, by writing an answer to her communication, couched in such terms as the most unbounded gratitude and affectionate devotedness could suggest.

On the day after his marriage, our hero despatched an epistle to his father, giving a full account of that happy event, and of the unexpected generosity by which he had become so suddenly enriched, expressing a hope that his fortune might assist in accelerating the decision of the Brambletye cause, and restoring the dilapidated mansion of his ancestors. To his friend Tracy also he communicated the happy change in his destiny, explained the nature of his connexion with Colonel Rathborn, and requested his advice as to the best mode of proceeding for the establishment of his innocence, and the public clearance of his character from all imputation. From the latter he speedily received an answer, congratulating him on his good fortune, and informing him that although the whole of the conspirators, both at the time of trial and place of execution, had completely ex-

onerated him from any participation in their desperate plans, it might be highly adviseable for him to return immediately, and offer himself, for form's-sake, to justice, lest his escape and continued residence abroad, should be assumed by his enemies as a confession of guilt. The proceedings against him, he added, had all been withdrawn, but still the legal proof of his innocence could only be established in the manner he suggested.

This advice our hero deemed it expedient to adopt without delay, and accordingly, after writing a letter to Constantia, detailing the motives of their return to England, and promising to acquaint her with the result of their expedition, the party commenced their journey to London, taking with them the faithful and phlegmatic Winky Boss, who, though he seldom removed the pipe from his mouth, except for the purpose of supplying its place by a draught of Schiedam, or some equivalent compound, was, from his methodical habits, quiet

manner, and long experience of travelling, most useful personage upon the road. Jocelyn too, from the remembrance of his services upon various occasions, particularly in rescuing him from the Tower-wherry, had become warmly attached to him; and Winky Boss was not less kindly disposed towards his master, although his heavy and sluggish features never betrayed any external symptom of emotion of any sort.

Upon their arrival in London, which city they reached without accident, Mrs. Walton signified her intention of retiring to reside at Ely, where she still retained a few chosen friends, who revered the memory of her husband, and participated in her own peculiar notions, both as to religion and politics. Here she had spent the early part of her life; here she wished to deposit her bones among those of the saints who had preceded her; and with a good conscience for the past, her Bible for the present, and hope for the future, she

expressed a confident trust that the remainder of her pilgrimage upon earth would be accomplished in perfect tranquillity and peace.

In conformity with Tracy's advice, our hero tendered himself to answer every charge that might be brought against him; and finding that all proceedings had been quashed, he procured a public notification of that circumstance to be inserted in the Gazette, together with the confession of the conspirators, in full confirmation of his innocence. His fair fame being thus vindicated from all reproach, he only staid long enough in London to visit his friends, by all of whom he was received with undiminished kindness, and then set out for the Moated House, in order to introduce his bride to Sir John. On approaching that usually dull and sleepy-looking residence, he was surprised at observing a flag waving from its roof; and this wonder was so keenly enhanced, when he noticed a column of smoke from almost every chimney, as if some great festivity were about to be cele-

brated within, that he urged the horses rapidly forward, in order to obtain some explanation of the phenomena.

Before Sir John was apprised of their arrival, they had learnt the occasion of all these joyful and unusual demonstrations. The long-pending Brambletye cause had not only been decided in favour of the ancient and rightful owner, but the purchaser had been ordered to make restitution of all the rents he had received, and to pay over a considerable sum for the dismantling and the dilapidations of the mansion; and this righteous award was not likely to be further contested. The “crop-eared Roundhead,” who had bought the estate, and whom Sir John continued to designate by that opprobrious term, even when he came to make propositions for payment, had agreed, in consideration of certain deductions of no great amount, to perform the remainder of the decree in the course of the following week; and, in the mean time, had made a formal surrender of the mansion and estate. This

most welcome occurrence, which Lady Compton entirely attributed to her visit to Whitehall, and her personal influence with the King; together with the expectation of the large sum in ready money to be paid next week, of which she never thought, without instinctively working all her fingers, as if she were counting it; had so upset her, that in the generosity of gratified avarice, she had suddenly given her consent to a measure which she had been ever since regretting. She had stipulated to surrender the key of the wine-cellar, and the disposal of the moated house for one entire day; and the delighted Sir John, who said he was determined that every chimney should smoke for it, and every binn be rummaged upon the occurrence of so rare a jubilee, and one which could be now so well afforded, had made preparations for a grand festival, to which many of the neighbouring gentry were invited; while all those of the tenantry, who had paid their rents to him in spite of the "crop-eared Roundhead" aforesaid, were to be plentifully re-

galed in front of the house, for which purpose tables were spread between the porch and the moat.

The occasion of these hilarious doings was not less gratifying to Jocelyn and Julia, than the sight of the happy throngs through which they had to pass as they approached the mansion. Jack Whittaker, who, notwithstanding his aversion to swipes, and his frequent threats of abandoning Skin-flint-hall, as he had nick-named the abode, could never make up his mind to quit his old master, had not only communicated all these welcome tidings to Jocelyn before he alighted from his coach, but had kindly undertaken to induct Winky Boss into the buttery, advising him to lose no time in addressing himself to the double ale, as his stomach would very soon be put upon half-pay, and reduced to the ordinary ration of sour small beer.

“ ’Sblood ! my dear boy ! ” cried Sir John, as he threw away his crutches, hopped into the parlour upon one leg, and snapped his fingers

for joy, as Jocelyn approached—"this is lucky indeed. Nothing but this was wanting to complete the happiness of the day. Welcome! a thousand times welcome! And is this buxom beauty your wife? Zooks! she's a likely-looking lass, and a merry. Right welcome are you, my pretty daughter, to the moated house." At these words he embraced her with a loud and hearty smack, and then continued—"Body-o'-me, Jocelyn! are you not an undutiful dog and a saucy, to make so much better a match than your father? Your wife is young and beautiful; mine is neither one nor t'other; your's brings you money; mine takes it away:—but, psha! comparisons are odious. You have heard all the good news, I find; I won't tell you any of the bad; so, instead of a word more about her ladyship, you and I will sing,

“ Hang care and sorrow!

A fig for to-morrow!

Let's be happy and merry to-day.

With a chirping glass,

And a laughing lass,——”

How goes the rest o'nt? No wonder the laughing lass put me out, for I haven't had such an article in the house for this many a year and sad. Your wife, Jocelyn, shall supply the place. 'Gad! she has a roguish eye. Who would have thought a poor foundling would ever turn out such a ——"

"I thought you had determined not to allude to any painful subjects to-day," whispered Jocelyn.

"'Sblood! and so I had:—I quite forgot that—poor! poor thing! I won't say a word more about it. So come, my pretty lass, as you have no father or mother of your own, you must lean upon the arm of a gouty old father-in-law, who will hop with you into the drawing-room, and introduce you to Lady Compton, and our friends and neighbours, for it's almost dinner-time, and our jollification shall wait for nobody."

With all the premonitions that Julia had received from her husband, not to be startled at

the strange appearance of her mother-in-law, and with every disposition in the world to resist the contagious titter that was running round the drawing-room, Julia could hardly suppress her risible tendencies on being introduced to that august specimen of bedizened pinguitude. To avoid the expense of new purchases, her Ladyship had still retained a Dutch gala-dress, which being renovated and vamped up for this joyous occasion, was enriched with her whole stock of finery, consisting of gilt buttons, bobs and tags, silver loops and tassels, sprigs of coloured foil, and equally valuable trumpery ; the stomacher being at the same time emblazoned with a whole constellation of paste jewellery, flint ornaments, and flaring glass beads. Although she had rendered herself thus gorgeous in honour of the occasion, she was so far from having invested her face with any holiday costume, that it wore a more than usual expression of peevishness and ill-humour, the probable expense of the enter-

tainment having rendered her completely miserable. In splenetic exclamations of Dutch, French, and English; dollars, guilders, and stivers; pounds, shillings, and pence; she kept perpetually inveighing against the cost of one article, the inutility of a second, the wastefulness of a third, and the gormandizing propensities of the rabble without, who were eating and drinking as if they would never be satisfied. Even the joy that she expressed at seeing Jocelyn and Julia, was flatly contradicted by her countenance, as she declared that she knew not where they were to sit, for "Saar Jan" had already invited more than the table would accommodate.

"Zooks, madam! what signifies?" cried Sir John, pettishly—"If the table won't accommodate them, they must accommodate themselves to the table. Surely you will not deny room to Jocelyn, now that he comes as the prodigal son returned."

"If he is de verlooren zoon, zo waar als ik

lieve—as sure as I live, you are de prodigal Vader,” replied her ladyship, with a risible sound, something between a chuckle and a grunt.

“ I have no objection to the character,” retorted Sir John, “ provided your ladyship will act the part of the fatted calf, and be killed for the comfort of the party.” A loud laugh attested his own sense of this coarse rejoinder; and her ladyship, whose previous ill-humour was aggravated by the triumph of her husband, was about to reply in a strain rather adapted to her original station of a fisherman’s wife, than to her present elevated rank, when hostilities were luckily prevented by the announcement of dinner.

To the dinner-room they accordingly betook themselves, where the mistress of the feast actually groaned aloud at the sight of the well-covered table, valuing each dish in succession, and casting up a mental sum-total that quite completed her dismay and ill-temper. Pre-

pared for this alarming effect upon the mind of his sordid spouse, Sir John had endeavoured to neutralize it, by placing before her a large tureen of her favourite water-zootje, which so far answered the purpose, that she instantly dedicated herself to it with great voracity, leaving her guests to shift for themselves, or make a fast instead of a feast, if they did not like to imitate the example of their hostess. In the scarcity of attendants to wait upon so numerous an assemblage, Winky Boss had been pressed into the service, and happened to enter the room, bearing a sirloin of beef, just at the moment when her ladyship was holding up her head to take breath. No sooner had she caught sight of him, than her eyes seemed starting from their sockets, she uttered a piercing scream, let fall the uplifted ladle from her hand, threw herself back in her chair, and ejaculated, “Godt Almagtig! het is Wouter Weegschaal!”

Winky Boss seemed to be scarcely less as-

tounded than her ladyship. His eyes, as they were riveted upon her, winked with an alarming rapidity, his arms, losing all power, gradually sunk down to his sides, leaving the dish and the sirloin to make their own way to the floor, and he exclaimed, with a groan, "De Dood ende de Duivel ! it is my wife !"

"Your what?" shouted Sir John, starting up, and hopping towards him, in springs of a yard each: "Your what? my good fellow, my worthy friend, my invaluable Mr. Wouter Weegschaal ! will you oblige me by the repetition of that last monosyllable? What did you call her?"

The party thus addressed remained silent, betraying no further signs of emotion, than by the continued and increased workings of his eyelids.

"'Sblood ! you winking loggerhead !" cried Sir John, losing patience, "don't tantalize me in a matter of this moment. Are you Wouter Weegschaal? Is my lady your wife?"

“Ja, ja ; that she is, sure enough,” said Boss, with a rueful nod of the head, “at least she *was*.”

“*Was*, you scoundrel ! *was*, you blinking blockhead !” shouted Sir John, “what do you mean by *was* ? If she *was*, she is ; and body o’ me, I believe it now : you begin to look as if she were,” cried Sir John, and, at the same time, seizing and grasping his hand, he continued : “My dear Mr. Wouter Weegschaal, my invaluable friend, allow me to congratulate you, for nobody can do it so sincerely as myself. Your wife will be not only restored to you in good condition as to flesh and fatness, but you will be well paid for having favoured me with the loan of her ; for she is rich, she must be rich, though the devil only knows where she hides her money. You are welcome to it all : take every thing that belongs to me, provided only you take one thing that belongs to yourself—videlicet—your wife.”

By this time her ladyship, or Mrs. Weegschaal, as we must henceforth call her, had

been removed from the apartment, in a sort of hysteric, compounded of weeping and water-zootje; and a few questions, addressed to her husband, sufficed to explain that, although his herring-buss had foundered in a storm, as had been correctly reported to his wife, he himself had been picked up by a fisherman of Yarmouth, and carried into that town, where he remained several years, having entered into partnership with his preserver. Not succeeding in this pursuit, and finding, upon his return to Holland, that his wife was wandering about with the exiled king of England and his court, and by no means anxious to resume the connexion, he had entered into the service of the Burgo-master at Rotterdam, where his present master had become acquainted with him in the manner we have already shown.

“ Jack Whittaker !” cried Sir John, feeling some sort of compassion for the woman, now that he was sure of getting rid of her, “ step and inquire how my lady is, I mean Mrs.

Weegschaal; see that she has every thing she desires, and draw her a fresh mug of small beer to comfort her; she will like nothing better."

"I beg your pardon, Sir John," answered Whittaker, "but I'll be cursed if I do. What, the foul fiend! have I been standing all this time behind the chair of a Dutch fisherman's wife? She may draw her own swipes for me! that's the least she can do, after making me drink it so long."

"My kind-hearted Mr. Wouter Weegschaal," continued Sir John—"you have the look of an amiable husband; you must have many things to say to one another after so long a separation; had you not better fly to your wife upon the wings of love?"

"Ja, ja, certainly"—replied the party thus addressed, as he crawled with a most lingering alacrity out of the apartment.

"And now my friends," cried Sir John, hopping back to his place, and rubbing his hands

together with egregious glee—"let us lose no more time, but begin the feast as well as we may, though we want the lady at the head of the table, and the joint at the bottom. Mr. Wouter Weegschaal (bless him for his uxoriousness! but curse him for his clumsiness!), has not only deprived me of my rib, but my sirloin. If you can do without the one, I promise you I can do without the other: but to show that I have not forgotten her, I beg to propose, before a mouthful be eaten, that we all drink her health in a bumper."

To humour their host, his guests cheerfully complied with his request. The banquet thus auspiciously begun was kept up with most hilarious mirth; the claret, liberated from the hand that had hitherto stinted its supply, passed rapidly and merrily round; and Sir John, who repeatedly declared that to have his estate and his son restored to him, and his wife taken from him, all at the same time, were such special blessings as called upon him to be sober and

grateful for the remainder of his life, sang scraps of all his old songs, and joked, and thanked Heaven for his good luck, and chuckled, and tiddled, until he was finally conveyed to bed in a state that threatened very ominously for the gout, should he continue to exercise his recovered authority over the claret-celler with similar indiscretion.

The guests had all retired, the clamour and merriment had subsided into the quietude that usually invested the dull precincts of the moated house, and the family were about to separate for the night, when loud shrieks were suddenly heard from without, and some of the servants, who had hurried to the spot, came running back to Wouter Weegschaal in great consternation, to inform him that his wife had fallen into the moat, imploring him to hasten to her assistance, as she was so corpulent and heavy that they could not raise her.—“Ja, ja,” said Weegschaal,—“I won’t lose a moment.—I’ll just light my pipe, and get a drop of something

warm, for the night air's raw, and be with you in a twinkling." After these indispensable preparations for saving his wife, he walked to the moat, where his vigorous arm, soon extricating her from the mud and water in which she was immersed, enabled him to discover the cause of the accident, and at the same time to claim, or rather to seize a reward for his services, which his tardy exertions in her behalf had scarcely merited.

In a hole of the moat-wall, which had formerly served as a drain, this sordid and avaricious woman had concealed a small iron box, to which, for some years past, she had been in the habit of stealing in the dark to deposit her hoardings. So secret had been her proceedings, that she had hitherto pursued this course without detection; and so diligently had she scraped and pilfered, that the box was nearly filled with gold, and was of course proportionably heavy. Her first thought, after having so unexpectedly discovered her husband, was the security of her

hidden treasure : presuming that she would be immediately ejected from her present abode, and taking it also for granted that Sir John would lay an embargo on the contents of her strong box, if he detected it, she began to be apprehensive that all would be lost, unless she could immediately effect its removal ; and with this intention she had betaken herself to the place of its concealment. Had she accomplished her purpose, her husband would in all probability have remained as ignorant of her wealth as Sir John had been ; but the weight of the box proved too much for her strength, and she rolled with her treasure into the moat : by abandoning the box she might have easily floundered out ; but being of Shylock's opinion, that they might as well take her life as that whereby she lived, she clung to her beloved gold, and plunged and struggled, until she became so completely imbedded in the mud, as to be obliged to call aloud for help. To the last, however, she retained her clutch of the handle, although she

was so exhausted, upon being pulled up from the moat, that her husband easily loosened her fingers from their grasp, and took upon himself the trouble of carrying off the weighty strong box, which he forthwith locked up in a cupboard, and put the key in his own pocket.

That we may not have occasion to recur to this Dutch couple, we may as well despatch the remainder of their history at once, by stating that when Weegschaal found himself so suddenly enriched by Sir John's permitting him to retain the money thus secured from his wife's grasp, he very naturally determined to quit service, and immediately set off for Holland with his vrouw, loaded with additional gifts from Jocelyn and Julia. Scarcely had Juffrouw Weegschaal set foot on her native land, when the violent cold she had caught from her immersion in the moat, being aggravated by the voyage, and the moist fogs she encountered upon her arrival, produced an inflammation of the chest, which in a few days carried her off. There

were some, who, from her own statements, rather attributed her death to a broken heart, occasioned by the discovery and seizure of her strong box; but whatever was the cause of the catastrophe, her husband supported it with his usual phlegmatic philosophy. With a perfectly stoical resignation he departed for Rotterdam, on the day after her interment, and purchasing a handsome edifice on the Boompies, commenced business as a tavern-keeper; giving his house, out of compliment to his old master, the name of the Beverning Arms, and exhibiting the cognizance of that family in a blazing escutcheon over the door. Here, while he had ample accommodations for the gentry and the better class of vistants, the task of attending to whom he resigned to a major-domo, he constituted himself sole sovereign of the tap-room; in which cheerful kingdom, if any of his subjects required a helpmate in despatching a modicum of schiedam, or wanted a companion in a pipe, they might always confidently look up for

assistance to the mouth of Mr. Wouter Weegschaal.

Returning to the party at the moated house, and the night when the late mistress of the mansion had been rescued from the mud, we proceed to state that the interrupted tranquillity of the abode had been just restored, and its inmates were again upon the point of retiring to rest, when Jocelyn was informed that a stranger had been admitted, who wished to see him upon most urgent business. Surprised at such a late hour to hear of a visitant, he proceeded to the parlour, where he beheld a tall person, who, having thrown aside the roquelaure in which he had been enveloped, discovered the figure of a monk, in the garb of the Jesuits. "A Jesuit here!" exclaimed Jocelyn, who had a vehement prejudice against that order, and immediately began to suspect some new plotting and trepanning. "May I inquire why I am favoured with a visit at an hour seldom chosen by those whose purposes are open and honourable?"

“ May not we rather inquire,” calmly replied the monk, “ why, under the persecution that we are so cruelly suffering, we are compelled to steal out covertly and in the dark, even when our purposes are those of common charity and Christian brotherhood? I forgive you that incredulous smile ; we have been so long misrepresented that it surprises me not. Calumny ever precedes cruelty ; beware lest by listening to one, you render yourself capable of the other. I come not to vindicate our order, but to discharge that duty which we make it our pride to perform, through good and evil report, alike towards those that love us, and those who despitefully use us. You knew, I believe, the deceased woman, Mary Lawrence?”

“ I have understood that she was of your communion,” said Jocelyn ; “ and I know that she was ever a bitter enemy to our house, although I could never guess the cause.”

“ Of that anon,” said the monk. “ You

married, I believe, Julia, the adopted daughter of Valentine Walton."

"Ha!" exclaimed Jocelyn, throwing off the reserve, which he had hitherto maintained, "can you tell me aught concerning Julia? Can you solve the mystery of her birth?"

"I am come for that express purpose," replied the monk. "I was confessor to the unfortunate Mary Lawrence, whose death releases me from my vow of secrecy, and enables me to make two fellow-creatures happy by revealing those facts, which I had often enjoined her to communicate to you or to your wife."

He then proceeded to relate every particular of Julia's abduction, exactly as Mrs. Lawrence had stated it to Mark Walton; repeating, that he had often commanded her to make atonement for the outrage she had committed, by restoring Julia to her family; more especially, after he learned the arrival of the latter in the neighbourhood of Brambletye; and that

upon her refusal he had imposed a heavy penance upon her, and suspended her from participating in the rites of the church, at which she had ever been a regular attendant.

“ I was not aware,” said Jocelyn, “ that we had in our vicinity any establishment for the celebration of the Romish solemnities.”

“ God’s word is not extinct among the people,” replied the monk ; “ though we may be prevented by grievous oppression, from lifting up our voice as in the better time. But if we are driven from our temples above-ground, we have subterranean oratories and altars, where with shorn splendour but undiminished zeal we worship God according to the observances of our fathers ; and where we have often celebrated mass, while the persecutor and slanderer have passed over our head, little wotting of our holy though forbidden doings. To one of these secret sanctuaries, and to my custody, did Mary Lawrence commit the vouchers that proved the parentage of the child she had rapt away—the

rich ornaments she wore, the chain and miniature with which she was found playing; and it was to deliver these into your own hands, to restore your wife to the fortune and honours of her family, that I have ventured forth from our little Zoar in the forest, braving arrest and danger by wearing this interdicted habit, and exposing myself to the suspicions and harsh conclusions of the man whom I was serving, by visiting him at an hour seldom chosen by those whose purposes are open and honourable." As he concluded his speech, he drew from beneath his robes a small casket, containing the articles to which he had alluded, and placed it in Jocelyn's hands.

"I stand abashed and self-rebuked at my injustice," exclaimed Jocelyn, who had listened with the deepest interest at this recital.—"You have conferred upon me an obligation inestimable in my eyes, because it secures the happiness of one whom I love better than myself. If I knew how to express my gratitude—how to

reciprocate this invaluable favour——” I am sufficiently rewarded already,” said the monk ; “ I have done my duty :—for myself I demand no other remuneration ; but for others of my communion I venture to request that you will henceforth judge more charitably of them, from what you have now seen of me.”—He crossed his hands upon his bosom, bowed, and walked out of the room.

Gratified as Julia was at this unexpected accomplishment of the only thing that was wanting to complete her happiness, she rejoiced in it more on the account of others than on her own. Any humiliating considerations that might attach to herself from the obscurity of her birth, she could bear with fortitude, however she might wish to see them removed ; but she had the keenest sense of any reproach, any thing derogatory to his dignity, that might be entailed upon her husband, by the choice he had made ; and she was doubly delighted to find not only that both were relieved from this stigma, but

that by proving to be the daughter of the late Sir William Compton, she might ultimately restore that friendly intimacy which her abduction many years ago had so unfortunately interrupted. Nor was it a less grateful reflection that this accession of happiness would be fully shared by Constantia, to whom she immediately wrote a circumstantial account of the discovery, declaring that notwithstanding all the generous sacrifices made in her behalf, her joy would have remained incomplete without this development of the mystery that involved her birth; and promising to send her a full, true, and particular statement of her interview with her grandfather, the Earl of Northampton, to whose seat in Warwickshire she had determined to proceed without delay.

As to Sir John, he had no sooner learned the welcome news, than he snapped his fingers, and hopped round Julia, and kissed her, and congratulated her with an ungovernable glee; declaring, that if he hadn't been as blind as a

buzzard, he might have seen that she was of his own birth and kin, since she had the merry eye of the Comptons, and their fine figure, and in fact the family beauty ; adding, however, that the Warwickshire branch, though they called themselves the head of the tree, were never so handsome as the Comptons of Sussex. He approved of the visit to the Earl, whom he irreverently designated as the surly old Hurlothrumbo ; authorising Jocelyn to declare, that although he could not admit himself to have been in error when they quarrelled so many years before, he was willing to make any reasonable overtures towards a reconciliation, which he hoped this auspicious marriage would perpetuate. Charged with these pacific instructions, which Jocelyn determined to exceed, if necessary to his purpose, he set off, accompanied by Julia, and arrived in due time in the immediate vicinity of the Earl's seat. A diverging road, at a little distance from the mansion, occasioning the driver to stop and apply for

instructions, which of the two branches he was to select, Jocelyn, who was equally unacquainted with the neighbourhood, alighted for the purpose of making some inquiry at a cottage. Advancing a little way for this purpose, he saw a party approaching him, preceded by a stern, though venerable-looking, personage, whom, from the descriptions he had received, he immediately guessed to be the Earl. This conjecture proved correct, nor was it, indeed, easy to be mistaken as to his identity. Disdaining all modern innovations, his lordship retained the old Cavalier vest and cloak, with slouched hat and drooping feather; his grey hair fell down to his shoulders, he had an ancient basket-hilted sword by his side, and his solid black boots had loose hanging tops of russet leather. An unhooded soar falcon, with the Earl's ver-vailles, was perched upon his right wrist; and as he walked forward in a stately kind of march, his falconer and other servants followed at a respectful distance, one of them leading his

horse, whose bit-bridle was studded with ivory, and the saddle and holsters richly embroidered with velvet and gold.

“ I believe I have the honour to address the Earl of Northampton,” said Jocelyn, taking off his hat and saluting him.

After drawing himself up with considerable dignity, putting one hand over his eyes, and measuring Jocelyn with a look of cold wonder, his lordship made a very slight inclination of his head, as if in assent to the conjecture.

“ I am the only son of Sir John Compton, of Brambletye,” continued our hero, “ whose respects I am in the first place charged to convey to your lordship.”

“ You have not found the load very weighty, Sir, I apprehend,” said the Earl haughtily; “ and yet you must have been a long while upon the journey, for methinks it is now many years since the Earl of Northampton has been honoured with any notice from that inferior branch of his family.”

“Public troubles and private misfortunes have hitherto prevented the performance of these courtesies, so regularly as he could have wished,” said our hero; “but I hope my father’s future deference will atone for all his past omissions; and I flatter myself, that the intelligence of which I am the bearer, will effectually restore him to your lordship’s good graces.” Jocelyn then entered into a concise, though succinct, narrative of the circumstances that proved the birth of Julia, observing that Mrs. Walton was able to confirm them in every particular; mentioning his marriage before these discoveries had been made; and concluding his statement by informing his lordship that she had come to implore his blessing, and was waiting in a carriage at a little distance, together with the jewels and ornaments in which she had been attired, when she was stolen away from Brambletye House.

“A marvellous proper story!” said the Earl, with a sneer—“and cunningly enough devised; but the Earl of Northampton admits not any

claimant to assume the honours of his family, without better warrant of identity and right than any you have yet adduced."

"Will your lordship allow me to submit the vouchers to your inspection?" inquired Jocelyn.

"I dispute not the claim of the trinkets," replied the Earl—"nothing so likely as that they may belong to my family; but it is not every female adventurer who may have possessed herself of these baubles that is to be received as my grand-daughter, or to be acknowledged as the heiress of the large fortune of Sir William Compton."

"Your lordship is the only man in England," said Jocelyn, reddening with anger, "whom I would allow to breathe such an insinuation with impunity. By the munificence of a female friend, your grand-daughter is already enriched beyond my utmost wishes; they who have divided among themselves the fortune, to which she is entitled, may therefore retain it. I come not to claim her inheritance, but to demand her

full recognition by the family from which she sprang, to restore to yourself a grand-daughter of whom the first nobleman in England might justly be proud, and to solicit on her behalf, as well as on my own, the patronage and protection of the powerful Earl of Northampton."

Neither the spirited and liberal tone of this speech, nor its ingratiating conclusion, were lost upon the Earl, who exclaimed in a more gracious manner than he had hitherto adopted, "Where is this young woman? bring her hither: I can have no objection to see her; but as to any further proceedings relative to her claims, I must decline personal interference, and refer you to my attorney."

Losing no time in availing himself of this permission, Jocelyn returned to the carriage, and led back the agitated Julia, who was about to bend on one knee and implore the Earl's blessing, when he exclaimed in a harsh and peremptory voice—"Stand up, Madam! stand up, and raise your head, that I may peruse

your features." He fixed a hand upon each shoulder as he said this, and, holding her, at some distance, proceeded to scrutinize her countenance ; while the falcon, retreating up his arm, fixed its large piercing eyes upon Julia, as if determined to examine her as intently as its master.

The stern suspicion which had at first imparted a peculiarly forbidding expression of incredulity to the Earl's countenance, gradually subsided into a look of tenderness and melting affection ; sad and affecting recollections seemed to be passing through his mind ; the muscles of his face relaxed, his eyes glistened, his compressed lips were drawn down at the corners, and he exclaimed in a broken voice—" My brave boy ! my darling William ! methinks I see him again standing before me. There is his merry eye, his smiling mouth, the very dimples in his cheeks, and his noble——" His voice failed him, and he remained contemplating his grand-daughter in silence, until

the emotions, which he was endeavouring to control, could no longer be repressed, — the tears rolled down his cheeks—he threw up his arms, tossing off the falcon into the air; and pressing Julia to his bosom, while his head reclined upon her neck, he sobbed aloud—
“My child! my child! my child!”

From that moment not a syllable more was uttered about a reference to his lordship's attorney. The old Earl was not less satisfied of his grand-daughter's identity, than proud of her charms and accomplishments; while Jocelyn's overtures towards a general reconciliation of the family, were now received with the most cordial assurances of reciprocal good-will and amity.

After having been entertained for some time with extraordinary splendour and festivity, the newly-married couple returned to the Moated House, when Jocelyn recommended his father, who had now received the large arrears that were due from the purchaser of Brambletye,

to appropriate part of the money to the rebuilding of the dilapidated mansion. But Sir John, partaking largely of the superstitious feelings then so prevalent, declared that the place was unlucky, that the curse of the black ghost was upon the walls, that it was ominous to re-construct a dwelling where two people had so lately met a violent death, and finally, that he was too old and infirm for so extensive an undertaking, and, moreover, very comfortable where he was. Brambletye House was accordingly abandoned to its fate; and the time that has intervened since its desertion, combining with the casualty and violence by which it was originally shattered and dismantled, has reduced it to its present condition of a desolate and forlorn ruin.

A letter from his old friend Tracy, to whom he had communicated his happiness, informed Jocelyn that the Queen still remained as well disposed towards him as ever, and would, if he still desired it, exert her influence to procure

his restoration to favour and some new appointment. But Jocelyn had seen too much of courts, to wish any return to such heartless and demoralising scenes. Birth and education had indeed made him in earlier life a staunch, not to say a bigoted and obstinate Royalist; but observation and experience had done much to qualify, and perhaps to exalt the feeling, by reducing it to the government of reason. However he might honour the generous self-devotedness, the chivalrous courage, the inflexible attachment, which had induced so many of the Cavaliers to sacrifice their lives and fortunes in the cause of royalty, he could not reverence the blind principle by which they were actuated. He could not do homage to that unreasoning, abject, dog-like fidelity which levels man to the brute, by making him crouch to the earth and lick the feet of his master, and only increase his crawling submission as his oppressor becomes more cruel and tyrannical. According to his interpretation of the word, loyalty signified that

submission to the law, which, while it inculcated fealty to an individual for the good of the community, called upon every true patriot to withdraw his allegiance from the mistaken monarch who should attempt to subvert the constitution which he was appointed to guard. This contingency appeared to him to be rapidly approaching. From the avowed religion of the Duke of York, the next heir to the throne, as well as from the political measures of the Cabal, he saw clearly that it was intended to introduce Popery and arbitrary power ; and, as he did not believe that the people of England would tamely submit to this double outrage upon their rights and feelings, he was not sorry to withdraw himself from the approaching struggle, at least until the arrival of the moment when he might contribute his individual efforts to the good cause, with some prospect of benefiting his country.

Under the influence of these impressions he retired to the Chateau in Normandy, which,

together with the ample estates that surrounded it, had been presented to them by the munificent Constantia; and its romantic situation, combined with the amiable and lively character of the French people, and the facilities of more frequent communication with their benefactress, attached him permanently to the spot. If ever the reader have travelled the beautiful lower road from Paris to Rouen, he has doubtless paused upon the heights that overhang Saint Ouen to admire the rich prospect before him, watered by the Seine, there a broad and majestic river, studded with numerous green and romantic islands. Upon those heights, and in full command of this picturesque and extensive view, stood the Chateau until the time of the Revolution, when it was purchased by the *Bande Noire*, and demolished for the sake of the materials. The stables, however, converted into a farm-house, and still exhibiting the remains of the Compton-arms over the *Porte-cochère*, are now in existence; and the name of

the Bois de Compton, retained to this day by the wood that sheltered the back of the mansion, sufficiently attests its site.

Freed from all the painful circumstances and disheartening associations, that had hitherto checked, though they could not entirely suppress, the natural exuberance of her spirits ; and animated by the principle, that the innocent happiness of the creature must be the most acceptable offering to the Creator, his beloved Julia constituted the delight of her husband, and dispensed cheerfulness and gaiety over the whole sphere in which she moved. Jocelyn's own experience had convinced him that vicious indulgence was not less discreditable to the head, than dull and disappointing to the heart ;—not less culpable as a crime, than contemptible as a proof of stupidity ;—and the example of Julia now afforded him a perpetual evidence that there is no felicity so pure, no joyousness so unfailling, as those which spring from the self-satisfaction of virtue. All the misanthropical notions which

he had for a moment imbibed, when he was seeking to justify his own evil courses by attributing the same depravity to others, he now utterly abjured; protesting, in his vindication, that he had never been a misogynist, since, in his progress through life, he had invariably found that all the more exalted, heroical, and sublime instances of constancy, virtue, disinterestedness, and self-dévotedness, had been furnished by the female sex.

Well, indeed, might he say so, after the sacrifices Constantia had made for his happiness; well might he continue to entertain that feeling as he perused her letters. In those high and holy effusions, whose celestial ardour was not, like that of Eloise, desecrated by the remains of an earthly passion, she congratulated herself more and more upon the choice she had made, and painted, in glowing colours, the pure and unalloyed felicity of her existence. Her enthusiasm had now assumed that tendency, to which, by the constitution of her mind,

it had always been peculiarly adapted: her heart had found an object, upon which it might pour out its affections even to overflowing; the yearnings of her soul might now satiate themselves to the very fulness of fruition. Only attached to this fleshly scene by the exercise of her charities, and by her correspondence with Julia and Jocelyn, she was, in all other respects, filling an intermediate existence, heavenly in all her thoughts, feelings, and aspirations, although her spirit was not yet set free from earth. She contemplated the world as a glorious and majestic, though fleeting, pageant, whose chief use was to lift up her thoughts to the Creator. Earth, with its sun and moon, the stars and clouds with their overhanging firmament, were but as conductors that brought down to her bosom the heavenly flame of holiness; or rather they were as stepping-stones for her imagination, by which she was enabled to pass over the depths of space, and climb up to the highest heaven, to hear the melody of

seraph harps and angel voices, and gaze upon the ineffable glories of the divine presence, until, in an antepast of the celestial beatitudes, her soul fainted with excess of ecstasy. These flights of the spirit, escaping for a short while from the body that encaged it, might be termed raptures, visions, dreams,—but what dull reality of life, what “sober certainty of waking bliss,” was ever half so pure, so sweet, so exquisite?

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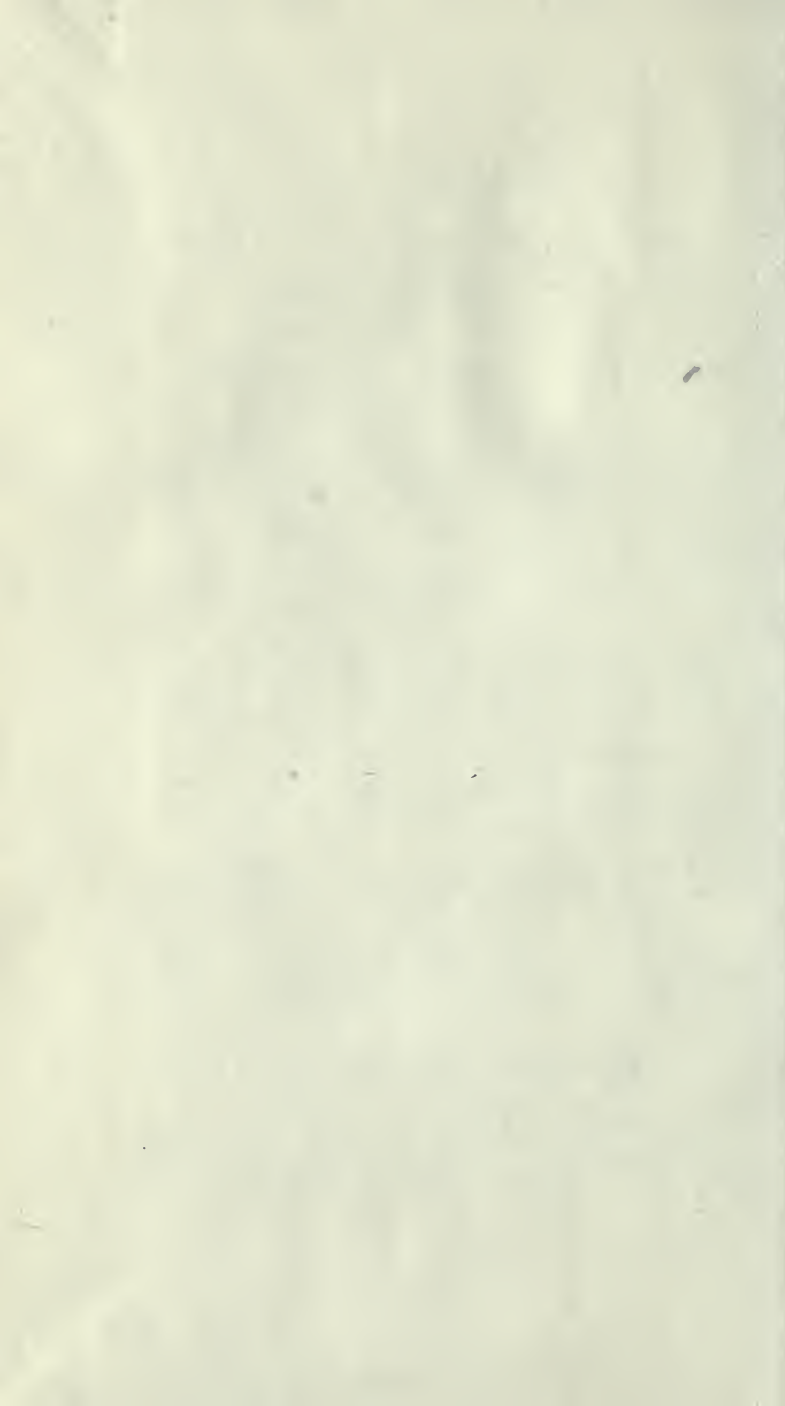
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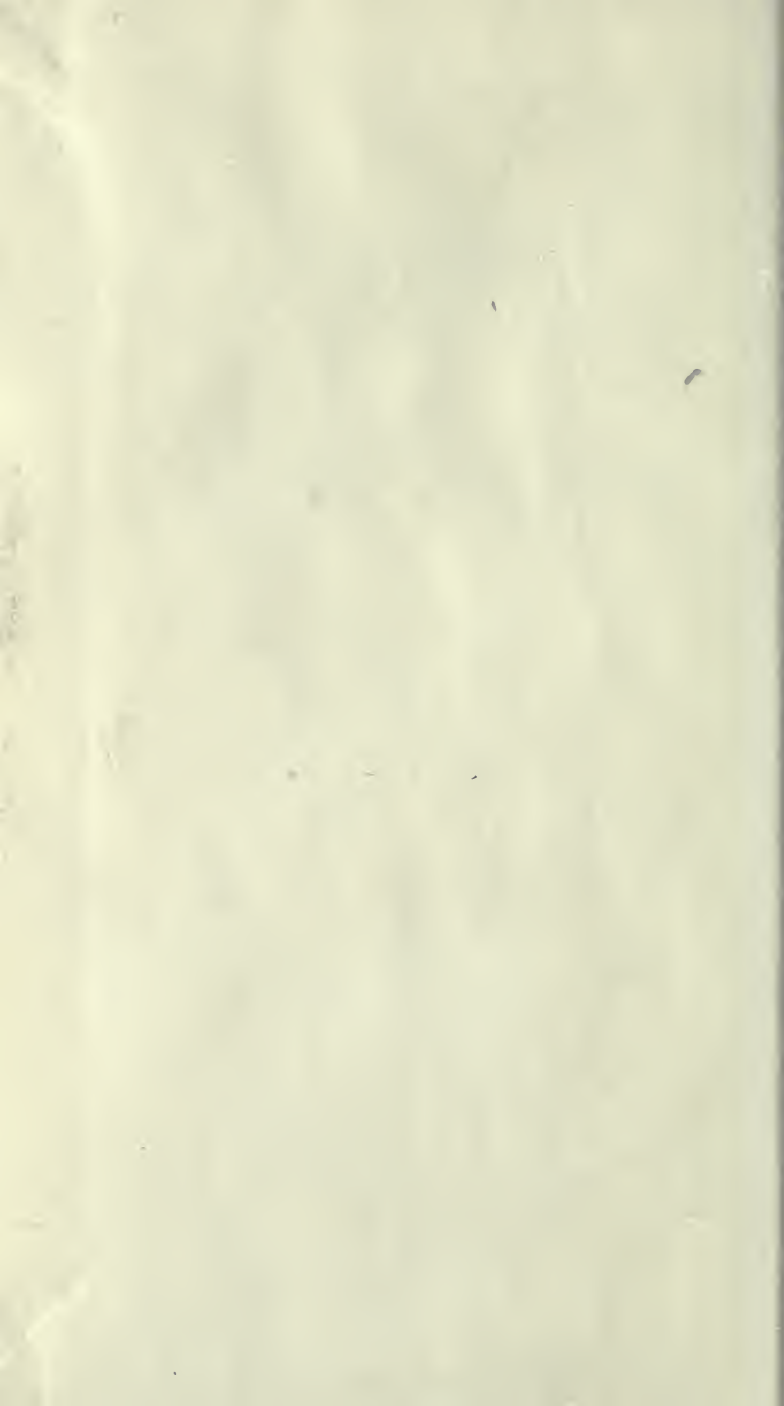
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